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New York

Co-Chairperson: Ms. Tarja Halonen ..... (President of the Republic of Finland)
Co-Chairperson: Mr. Sam Nujoma ..... (President of the Republic of Namibia)

The meeting was called to order at 3.35 p.m.

Statement by the Co-Chairpersons

The Co-Chairperson (Finland): Before proceeding to the list of speakers, I will read the statement by the Co-Chairpersons of the Millennium Summit of the General Assembly, welcoming the Inter-Korean Summit and the Follow-up Measures.

> "The Co-Chairpersons of the Millennium Summit welcome the summit meeting held in Pyongyang in June this year between the leaders of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the Republic of Korea and their Joint Declaration as a major breakthrough in bringing peace, stability and reunification to the Korean peninsula, and encourage the two parties to advance the process of dialogue so that it may eventually lead to the peaceful reunification of the peninsula, while contributing to the peace and security of the region and beyond."

Addresses on the occasion of the Summit (*continued*)

The Co-Chairperson (Finland): The Assembly will now hear an address by Her Excellency Mrs. Vaira Vike-Freiberga, President of the Republic of the Latvia.

President Vike-Freiberga (*spoke in French*): At the dawning of the third millennium this Summit inspires us to reflect on our future and on the role that the United Nations must continue to play to improve the human condition the world over. May I congratulate Mr. Kofi Annan on the numerous and highly commendable initiatives that he has introduced and supported as Secretary-General.

I wish to turn immediately to the important fields in which challenges remain to be met.

(*spoke in English*)

Globalization presents a major challenge to the United Nations, involving as it does, almost by definition, every nation on this planet. The continuing spread of technological and other improvements is providing new opportunities to advance human societies and to create higher living standards across the planet. However, in many countries, poverty and want show little sign of decreasing, and may even be worsened by some aspects of globalization. Not surprisingly, this has created widespread disaffection against the very process.

The United Nations, as a global and international Organization, can play a major role in ensuring a more equitable distribution of the resources generated through globalization. It can draw on the unique strengths of its universality and neutrality, and on its established, on-the-ground presence in numerous countries.

These strengths allow the United Nations to make objective assessments of the difficulties in each particular country and to prescribe remedial courses of

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action in partnership with the Governments concerned. However, the plethora of United Nations bodies with differing mandates has become unwieldy, difficult to manage and confusing. In some cases, the configuration of the United Nations presence does not match the requirements of a particular country.

The United Nations must therefore strengthen its coordinating role and streamline its institutions. It must focus on results and impact. It must develop assistance programmes without competition, overlap or waste. The United Nations must reassess its resource-allocation policies, which, in some cases, have proven most wasteful and ineffective. It is one thing to oppose conditionality, but there should be no objections to stricter accountability and tighter follow-up requirements, thus ensuring that any aid received is well and truly spent on the purposes it had been destined for.

The United Nations must also reassess its military peacekeeping operations, not all of which have been successful. Recently, 500 United Nations soldiers were captured and then released by rebel forces in Sierra Leone. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, United Nations peacekeeping efforts have not attained their objectives. In Bosnia and Herzegovina and in Rwanda, United Nations peacekeepers became passive witnesses to wide-scale slaughter and atrocities and, just this morning again, we heard about tragedies in East Timor.

There is little purpose in passing peacekeeping resolutions that cannot be implemented. Perhaps we should prepare for worst-case scenarios and arm the United Nations forces for more muscular peace enforcement, rather than send in lightly armed troops who cannot intervene in serious armed conflict. The report of the United Nations Panel on Peace Operations contains constructive recommendations that are well worth considering. This is one major issue that will have to be addressed by the Security Council.

Regarding the reform of the Security Council itself, Latvia agrees that such reforms are urgently needed in order to make that important organ better reflect existing realities.

It is my pleasure to announce that, within Latvia's modest possibilities, my country has donated a beautiful and fully renovated building in the old town of Riga, the capital city, for the use of the United Nations organizations in Latvia. As a donor country, Latvia is also increasing its contributions to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and covering UNDP's local office costs. In addition, Latvia is once again making a voluntary contribution to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights.

Latvia believes that, at the turn of the millennium, the United Nations Member Governments must work seriously to render this Organization more efficient and effective in the common fight against poverty, war, corruption, lawlessness and torture and in the promotion of human rights. We must concentrate our efforts on transforming the United Nations into an efficient problem-solving and development-oriented Organization that people can truly trust and rely upon. May it truly come to pass.

The Co-Chairperson (Finland): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Natsagiyn Bagabandi, President of Mongolia.

President Bagabandi (*spoke in Mongolian, English text furnished by the delegation*): Mongolia views this unprecedented gathering of world leaders as an event of historic importance that offers us a unique opportunity to reaffirm our faith in the United Nations and to formulate our shared vision on how collectively to address the pressing challenges, both existing and emerging. The United Nations has consistently manifested its undisputed authority in identifying ways and means to address major global problems. Yet, the need to reform and adapt the United Nations to the evolving international realities, with a view to ensuring its efficient functioning in the era of globalization, appears to have been universally recognized.

Some important steps to this end have already been taken. However, the reform process, particularly the Security Council reform, has a tendency to slow down and there is therefore an apparent need to take appropriate measures to accelerate it. Mongolia is in favour of a just and equitable enlargement of the Security Council by increasing the number of permanent and non-permanent seats and ensuring representation of developing and developed countries alike. We also favour the democratization of international relations through increased openness and transparency in the work of the Security Council and an enhanced role of the General Assembly, as envisaged in the United Nations Charter.

In carrying out its activities in the maintenance of international peace and security, the United Nations

should give priority to preventive diplomacy, especially in matters pertaining to international and internal disputes and conflicts. In this respect, further enhancement of the relevant international mechanisms appears to be crucial. Furthermore, ensuring the universality of international instruments concerning disarmament, crime prevention, human rights, the environment and other fields requires further collaborative efforts and a strong display of political will by all the stakeholders.

As the Secretary-General rightly pinpoints in his millennium report, the central challenge we face today is to ensure that globalization becomes a positive force for all the world's people. Today, not only do ideas of globality pervade the language of politicians, economists and researchers the world over; globalization as a reality has generated a host of multifaceted challenges beyond the reach of a single nation. It has become more evident that, along with greater opportunities, globalization has created situations of heightened vulnerability. This is all the more true for the weak and poor nations and leads to their further marginalization.

The question is how to manage the inevitable process of globalization so that it incorporates the human dimension in its seemingly unruly trends. Mongolia believes that, with its impartiality and universal legitimacy, as well as its Charter-based prevalence over any other international agreement, the United Nations is uniquely placed to provide an overarching general guidance to the process of globalization so that its benefits may be enjoyed by all, especially the small States.

No matter how liberal the world economy is becoming, it is a matter of fact that many developing countries have found themselves handicapped in seeking to enjoy the fruits of global liberalization. Therefore, it is our considered view that countries in a disadvantaged location, facing specific difficulties and serious constraints in their development efforts, need the closer attention and support of the international community. Proceeding from this premise, Mongolia has circulated as an official document of the United Nations the memorandum of its Government on how to enhance the role of the Organization in promoting the security interests of small States. We would appreciate the inputs and support of the other Members regarding our initiative.

Mongolia fully shares the Secretary-General's call upon us, the Member States, to spare no effort to make the United Nations a more effective instrument in pursuing the threefold freedom identified in the millennium report. The honourable mission of ensuring human security and promoting human-centred development should remain high on the agenda of the world Organization. In recognition of the crucial role of education in human development, Mongolia reiterates its conviction of the need to launch a United Nations literacy decade to marshal strong political will and determination towards ensuring lifelong education for all.

Mongolia fully supports the Secretary-General's proposal to establish a health inter-network with 10,000 on-line sites in developing countries to provide access to up-to-date medical information and to ensure reliable and fast communications in disaster-stricken areas.

Over the last decade, Mongolia has developed democratic institutions in the political, economic and social spheres, while promoting human rights and fundamental freedoms and pursuing an open and multi-pillared foreign policy.

The new Parliament and Government of Mongolia, which were formed following the general elections held last July, are resolved to vigorously pursue the programme of action designed to revive and encourage the national economy, ensure sustained economic growth, upgrade the living standards of the people, and reduce poverty and unemployment in close cooperation with the international community.

May I express my confidence that this Summit will yield a common strategy for the world community to collectively work in the new century towards a safer, more equitable and prosperous future.

The Co-Chairperson (Finland): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Abdelaziz Bouteflika, President of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria.

Mr. Bouteflika (*spoke in French*): Although it has become commonplace to talk about the astonishing progress made in science and technology, it is nevertheless true that the effects of that progress on our daily lives and on our societies are not yet fully known. Those unknown effects can lead to speculation of the wildest sort. The conquest of space and the often

striking advances in genetics could give one the impression that man now has unlimited power over nature and the universe. However, those achievements have also allowed the continued existence of the ills that beset the majority of mankind and for which we have yet to find solutions.

Advances in communications that would have seemed unimaginable just a few years ago have certainly shrunk our world. But have those advances similarly increased the feeling of solidarity among human beings and between peoples? We know that this shrinking of our universe is leading inexorably towards globalization, from which none of us will be able to escape. We also know that it foretells a real shake-up in the behaviour and structures of our societies and the international community as a whole.

Such changes are worrisome because of their scope, their suddenness and, above all, because they seem to be independent of our own will. We must adapt to those changes or be condemned to remain on the fringes of modern life, unable to ascertain the future or to act on it. Will we be able to maintain a semblance of free will in this mad pursuit into which we are being dragged by the new discoveries in science and technology? Will we be able to make our own choices, set our own priorities, and preserve the moral values on which our civilizations have been built?

The legitimate fears aroused by these questions are even more acute in our underdeveloped countries, where our economic, social and even cultural structures are more vulnerable to these assaults by progress and to the constraints of a globalization that is creeping progressively but inevitably into our daily lives and that daily decreases the scope of our freedom. At the dawn of the twenty-first century, we therefore wonder with the greatest concern about the place our countries will occupy in tomorrow's world, a world based on the implacable law of power and governed by the inflexible rules of the market. Will we still be able to make our voices heard in the debates that will decide our future, or will we lapse into some sort of disguised servitude in which we will once again become the objects — either consciously or not — of schemes that will by and large exclude us?

The idea of democracy has made its way in the world and is beginning to permeate political life in our countries. Democratic culture is spreading throughout social classes as the intellectual level of our populations increases. Conversely, international life is increasingly moving away from democratic practices as decision-making power is being concentrated in the hands of the great Powers, especially in those of the developed countries.

But here again, things are changing. Under globalization, even political decisions are governed by economic considerations. This brings into play the financial interests of multinational corporations and highlights the market forces that now govern traditional diplomacy. As has been said, old negotiators no longer play any role other than that of being mere baggage handlers to high-flying banks and multinationals.

In a word, the world is becoming de-humanized, and that is the source of the anguish I referred to that is felt by all countries of the South and which for us is characteristic of our entry into the third millennium. While prosperity is increasing in rich countries and becoming more promising, our countries are floundering in underdevelopment that we absolutely cannot overcome because of the weight of endless debt. Will we one day be able to free ourselves from this crushing subservience and finally be able to devote our resources to our development and the well-being of our populations? From now on we are bound to a system of expanded, unequal and mercilessly marginalizing competition.

We would like to convey here our feeling of deep helplessness, not to tarnish the excitement we share with everyone else at seeing human beings extend their power and domination over nature, but to warn about the price that will have to be paid if the majority of mankind were to be marginalized in an international society based solely on the notion of material profit.

For us, the United Nations remains the Organization best able to take note of our fears and to try to find appropriate answers. The Organization has survived all the hazards of international life. No one can call into question the undeniable service it has rendered to the cause of peace in the world. It will certainly have to submit itself to renovation in order to ensure the preservation of the ideals of justice and peace that were part of its creation. In this regard, the analyses and suggestions contained in the report of the Secretary-General seem to us fully relevant. I would like to refer to just one of the observations contained in the report.

It is clear that the game of international relations that used to be played exclusively among States increasingly involves that which we have agreed to refer to as civil society — represented by non-governmental organizations — and is extending to increasingly diverse fields. I personally think that the role of non-governmental organizations must be acknowledged and that it is in everyone's interest to determine the status of non-governmental organizations in international relations.

Our concerns are numerous and pressing, and time is short. I simply wish to say that I hope that this Summit will lead to an awareness of our nations' difficulties and of the worries of our peoples. Faced with misery and endless distress, we would like to believe in the advent of a world in which the right to dignity is not measured in dollars. We remain deeply convinced that dignity is an essential, absolute and definitive characteristic of the human condition.

The Co-Chairperson (Finland): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Alyaksandr Lukashenka, President of the Republic of Belarus.

President Lukashenka (*spoke in Russian*): The Almighty has endowed States and peoples, just like individuals, with equal rights to freedom, peace, security and a decent life. Yet for many centuries a small group of States has ruled the destinies of the world, regarding other nations and peoples as a mass with no rights.

The great achievement of the United Nations system, as I see it, is that the division of peoples into subjects and objects of international law has been eliminated. Today every State, regardless of its size and resources, has the opportunity to participate on an equal basis in solving the topical problems facing the world community.

The Belarusian people have made a considerable contribution to the establishment of this just system. And we cannot accept any attempts to dictate to us how we should live and with whom we should be friends.

Having sacrificed the lives of one third of its citizens to the cause of victory in the war against fascism, Belarus is capable of determining its own destiny. Having fully experienced the horrors of devastating wars, Belarus cannot be indifferent to the attempts to break the stability of the emerging world order, to disrupt the geopolitical balance in the world, and bring back the times when States were divided into first- and second-rate countries.

The proposals of the United Nations Secretary-General Mr. Annan, which are aimed at increasing the Organization's efficiency, evoke our profound interest.

In implementing these proposals it is important, as we say, not to throw out the baby with the bathwater. The aims and principles of the United Nations Charter should be preserved. Only under these conditions can we ensure that the Organization's activity yields practical results and that it is capable of effectively responding to the global challenges of our time.

I think everybody will agree that with all the diversity of the goals of the United Nations, the main task of the Organization is to ensure international peace and security.

For the time being, unfortunately, the United Nations is not fully able to deal with the task of preventing aggression and armed conflicts. The cases where military force was used, bypassing the United Nations Security Council, have not resolved any issues, but have only aggravated existing problems. Belarus holds the view that military force cannot be a legitimate instrument of foreign policy in the twenty-first century.

The intention to make the world a safer place was the main motive behind our decision to renounce the status of a nuclear State.

I do not understand those countries who speak so insistently about the threat of nuclear proliferation, sometimes from this rostrum, but at the same time do not want to take on the responsibility of making Central and Eastern Europe free of nuclear weapons, as proposed by Belarus on many occasions.

I avail myself of this opportunity to draw the attention of the world leaders present here today to the problem of environmental protection and the responsibility of large and small nations in that area.

Many in the world have already started to forget the greatest man-made disaster of the past century — the Chernobyl disaster — whose main victim was Belarus. The moral duty of the United Nations is to mobilize world resources for dealing with the consequences of the Chernobyl and other ecological disasters. Without awareness of our joint responsibility

for preserving the common human environment, all discussions of a fair distribution of the benefits and disadvantages of globalization will remain just shallow talk.

Human rights and democracy are the central issues of the Millennium Summit. I believe that nobody in this hall would question the significance of these values and high standards, which are set out in United Nations documents.

The problem is that human rights and democracy are increasingly often being used by some States as a pretext for punishing objectionable countries and nations.

Recently, efforts have been made to create a sort of "club of the elect", which excludes the majority of the world's nations. This arrogant attempt to divide the peoples into "teachers" and "pupils" can do no good for the real encouragement of democracy and human rights.

In conclusion, I would like to draw your attention to the necessity for a more deferential attitude to the unique nature, existing way of life and historical destiny of every nation.

For the time being, unfortunately, in international relations we are facing more frequent attempts of the bigger Powers to treat all alike and reject any national and regional features which do not fall into the customary framework of the "Western way of life".

I doubt whether the overwhelming majority of the United Nations would agree with such arrogance.

Belarus is in the mainstream of democratic development. But in promoting democracy we rely, and shall continue to rely, on our own way of life and national spiritual traditions which have been maturing over centuries.

This is why we manage to combine development, democracy and stability. There are not and have never been any religious or ethnic conflicts in our country. Our borders are the borders of peace and cooperation. We are open to friendship and cooperation with all those who respect our country and people.

Addressing the United Nations from this high rostrum, I declare that in the new millennium my country shall continue to be your reliable partner in promoting the cause of peace and security on the planet.

The Co-Chairperson (Finland): Before giving the floor to the next speaker, I would like to make an appeal. Members are aware that there are still several speakers remaining on the list of speakers for this meeting. Since we must exhaust the list for each meeting, I should like to appeal to the participants in the Millennium Summit to respect as much as possible the five-minute speaking time allotted to each speaker. This would allow us to hear all the speakers on the list.

The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Thomas Klestil, Federal President of the Republic of Austria.

President Klestil: This assembly of world leaders is a unique occasion to celebrate and reaffirm our unity of purpose and our support for the United Nations. Guided by the Secretary-General's Millennium Report, we are also called upon to explore the longer-term necessities and options of development in our community of nations. Arnold Toynbee's theory of history as the result of "challenges" and the respective "responses" offers a suitable approach for analysing the United Nations.

Built on the ashes of the disastrous Second World War, the Organization's agenda and mode of operation have evolved in response to the issues of each decade. It is amazing how the world Organization, over more than half a century, has been able to provide valuable leadership in promoting peace and security; in successfully supporting the decolonization process; in promoting and protecting a global system of human rights standards; in transforming itself, in part, into a broad-based programme of development cooperation; in articulating and addressing the new global agenda as it has evolved, dealing with population growth, human rights, social development, the role of women in our societies, natural resources and sustainable development and food and health, all issues that were the subjects of world conferences during the past decade.

This Summit also offers a special opportunity to thank all those men and women who have served the United Nations with great dedication and distinction — especially those who have lost their lives in the defence of high goals and ideals. A special tribute is due to the Secretaries-General of the Organization, from Trygve Lie, Dag Hammarskjöld, U Thant, Kurt Waldheim, Javier Pérez de Cuéllar and Boutros Boutros-Ghali to Kofi Annan. Coming from a country which hosts one

of the main centres of the United Nations and its specialized agencies, I should like to convey my profound appreciation for the enthusiasm and idealism of the staff, which has been a major resource for the development of the world Organization.

One of the most significant achievements of the recent past has been the increasing democratization of global affairs. The Secretary-General, making an allusion to the Charter, rightly entitled his report (A/54/2000) "We the peoples" and not "We the Governments". Over the past 30 years, it may have been peoples more than Governments that shaped and promoted the agenda of the United Nations. Especially since the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, held in 1972 at Stockholm, we have benefited from a dynamic interrelationship between diplomatic negotiations on the one hand and the articulations of international civil society on the other. Today, it might well be unthinkable to deal with any global issue without the participation and contributions of civil society. The way we address today issues of human rights, of the environment, of disaster relief and development cooperation, of security and, in particular, of human security, to mention only a few, is characterized by new forms of dialogue, participation and commitment on the part of civil society. Neither the successful completion of the negotiations on the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction nor the Rome process towards an International Criminal Court would have been possible without the truly innovative and productive response on their part.

I should also like to welcome the recent initiative by the Secretary-General to develop a new partnership with the business community. To face the challenges of globalization, a platform like the "Global Compact" — which emerged from the discussion at the World Economic Forum in Davos — can certainly make a valuable contribution to addressing global issues and the broad societal responsibilities they entail.

Over the past decades the United Nations has shown impressive flexibility and an ability to carry out institutional innovation. However, if we review the past development of United Nations organs and organizations, we have to admit that much of this was rather sectoral, ad hoc and always under the constraints of budgetary limitations. In short, I believe that the most important question put before us by the Secretary-General relates to the institutional development of the United Nations. It is there that great efforts are required and that innovative responses will have to be found to make real a renewed United Nations in a global neighbourhood of peace and development for all.

Keeping in mind the complex interrelationships that exist today among the manifold dimensions of peace and security, of economic and human-centred development and of environmental sustainability, our approach to the institutional challenge will have to be more comprehensive than in the past. The new challenges in dealing with the global agenda require new intersectoral, interdisciplinary, broad-based institutional responses. This implies that our approach to the challenge of renewing the United Nations must not be limited to a specific function, to a specific organ or even to a specific organization. The time has come to understand the institutional development of the United Nations as comprehending the entire global agenda, the entire system of organizations, and all types of actors: Governments, the academic community, civil society, parliamentary representatives and business leaders.

The millennium is a good moment to begin, and this Summit is an excellent occasion to gather the necessary political will and momentum. No quick fixes are possible. All elements in our global society must participate and share in the responsibility for our common future. With the goal of implementing the fundamental objectives of the Charter, we must establish the institutions appropriate for the agenda of our time.

The Co-Chairperson (Finland): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Majesty Mswati III, Head of State of the Kingdom of Swaziland.

King Mswati III: I am delighted to represent the Swazi nation at this historic Millennium Summit. The entire membership of the United Nations has gathered together for these three days to agree on how our Organization must adapt in order to assist its Members to meet the challenges of the twenty-first century.

The Kingdom of Swaziland is presenting its proposals for the future role of the United Nations to enable the Organization to support us more efficiently in our efforts to meet the development priorities of our people.

We will be discussing much-needed changes in the structure, accountability and operations of the Organization. But the Summit also provides the perfect opportunity to address the issue of global relationships and, in particular, how to correct the imbalance of wealth and social standards between the North and the South. In this increasingly interdependent world, it is more important than ever for Member States to work together in unity and with respect for one another's individual viewpoints, regardless of size, influence and economic strength.

We hope that the Summit will reconfirm the agreement of all Members that concepts such as globalization are intended as a way for all countries to benefit evenly from the new world order, and not as a means of continuing domination by the strong over the weak. And we would expect the needs of the developing world to be treated seriously, with a commitment from our partners to support our priority objectives in an open and honest manner, while respecting national wishes and beliefs, and without conditions that undermine sovereignty and independence.

The Kingdom of Swaziland has three major concerns that we believe require United Nations leadership in the twenty-first century. These involve the acceptance of responsibility by the Organization, acceptance of a leading role in conflict prevention and resolution; in resource mobilization for development priorities; and in the fight against HIV/AIDS.

From an African perspective, it is a fact that conflicts and instability on our continent not only cause immense suffering to those directly involved, but can also have a negative effect on the rest of our people. We therefore fully support the call by the Secretary-General for the United Nations to work hand in hand with regional groupings to prevent potential conflict by addressing the root causes of problems.

In the global effort to eradicate poverty, we believe the United Nations must take a much stronger position in helping developing countries mobilize financial resources with which to implement their priority projects, especially in job creation and essential infrastructure.

And finally, with the terrible threat of HIV/AIDS casting its shadow over the start of this new century, there is surely an urgent need for the United Nations to take the lead in the global fight against this powerful enemy of mankind. Because of AIDS, approximately one quarter of my people will not survive beyond the next 10 years and this is a fate they share with all too many others in the developing world. We must acknowledge that AIDS is a far greater threat to global stability than even the great wars of the last century. We have to act now to stop the spread of AIDS, before its devastating effects overtake those of the current conflicts on which we concentrate so much of our attention and resources. Among all the worthy talk of United Nations restructuring, let this message on HIV/AIDS be strong, focused and resource-oriented. This is truly a role that the United Nations must play in this century, if it is to fulfil its mandate to the people it serves.

The Kingdom of Swaziland places great faith and hope in the success of this Summit. Our people deserve the fullest commitment of all Member States to recreate an Organization that lives up to the ideals of our founding Charter. We have the opportunity now to set the United Nations on the right course for the rest of the century. The Kingdom of Swaziland stands ready to play its full part in the process.

The Co-Chairperson (Finland): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Andrés Pastrana Arango, President of the Republic of Colombia.

President Pastrana Arango (*spoke in Spanish*): I come to this historic Summit today not only as President of my country, but also as the voice of 500 million inhabitants of this planet who live in the 33 States of Latin America and the Caribbean that form the Rio Group, of which I am today the Secretary pro tempore.

In their name, I proclaim the following.

We aspire to be, above all, a region of peace.

We value the protection of human rights, in their full concept, and of the environment, since protecting both is a way of defending man.

We reject all forms of intolerance and discrimination.

We exalt solidarity and cooperation as the values that should guide us in the twenty-first century.

And we therefore declare that the United Nations is the most important world Organization, and it is our duty to strengthen and increase its capacity. We

therefore support a multilateralism that always acts within the framework of the United Nations as the prime regulator of world order, and we consider unacceptable any international action taken outside the legal framework of the Organization's Charter or any reform that would be to the detriment of the Organization's social agenda.

We in Latin America and the Caribbean declare that we are supporters of and committed to democracy and respect for human rights as the guiding principles of the new international order. This is what we, the Presidents of the Rio Group countries, asserted in Cartagena when we signed a "Commitment to Democracy", and when all the Presidents of South America ratified it less than a week ago in Brasilia.

With the authority to which we are entitled as the world's first major nuclear-weapon-free region, Latin America and the Caribbean strives to create a world free of the nuclear threat and of other weapons of mass destruction. We also support the upcoming international conference on the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, and we condemn the use of excessively cruel and inhumane weapons, especially "home-made" weapons.

Avoiding war is a priority and a matter of urgency, but where conflict already exists we must at least observe the rules of international humanitarian law. Colombia firmly stands by its positions, and I am proud to be able to say that today there is no one under age serving in our armed forces.

In order to secure a firmer future for generations to come, we must also show courage and determination in facing the global problem of unlawful drugs and related crimes such as money-laundering' the trafficking in and diversion of chemical precursors; contraband; and arms dealing. The Rio Group is convinced that this is a problem for all, and that it must be solved by all in a global effort which should be based on the principle of shared responsibility.

It is our duty to foster the conditions so that the globalization process of the last 10 years can be controlled, humanized and made equitable. In these new circumstances, trade and finance cannot lose sight of human beings and their needs. In Latin America and the Caribbean there are more than 200 million poor who hope to share the benefits of progress, and we cannot leave them behind. What we seek is growth with social equity.

For this, we need international cooperation to finance the networks of social protection and the investment in human capital and the infrastructure. We need to increase the flow of international trade and put an end to the protectionist measures of the wealthier and more developed countries.

In sum, we need a new architecture for the international financial system which will help to secure stability and provide assistance and support for countries which are undergoing a process of adjustment.

I come from Colombia, a beautiful country inhabited by 40 million people who love life and where, unfortunately, an absurd confrontation persists, fuelled by a few violent persons and by tainted drug-traffic money that affects and involves the entire world. But we are committed to the quest of a negotiated peace. We are possessed by a desire to achieve greater social justice for our most needy. We are determined to combat drug-trafficking and to fight for human rights. We have been living in democracy for over 180 years and we shall continue to live in democracy. We are the future. We are the promise. We are a land of hope and friendship. On the shoulders of our heroes, suffering the anguish of our poor, trusting in the talents of our people, we are, in the words of our Nobel laureate Gabriel Garcia Marquez, striving for a second chance on the earth, and I have no doubt that we shall obtain it.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Gustavo Noboa Bejarano, Constitutional President of the Republic of Ecuador.

President Noboa Bejarano (*spoke in Spanish*): Since its creation the United Nations has been a universal meeting place of States to work for the shared ideals and objectives of all peoples. Today it is welcoming the largest number of heads of State and Government from all the regions of the world. This undoubtedly constitutes an acknowledgement of the full validity of the multilateral system of relations among States when, in the globalized world, the individual action of Governments yields to the collective treatment of global policy and strategies for effective and united management of international affairs.

The globalization process is developing independently of the great objectives of security,

economic stability and development. The debt problem and the financial market crises have weakened the possibilities of economic stability and development. The causes of alarming levels of poverty and misery in the majority of countries are increasingly found beyond national borders and a nation's control, since Governments have less leeway to apply policies that mitigate unemployment and inequality, heightened by external circumstances and by non-humanitarian globalization. Violence, drug trade, terrorism and the deterioration of the environment have all burst forth as global phenomena that threaten all humankind, and international measures have not yet been taken to offset the effects of a system which for now is clearly one of profit and fierce competition and is dehumanizing in its very essence.

In recent years we have been witnesses to the worsening of regional conflicts. Wars have left deep and lasting scars in different parts of the world. Grave violations of basic human rights and international humanitarian law remain in evidence. The stockpiling and unjustifiable development of nuclear weapons and other weapons of destruction continue as a constant threat to humankind.

The successes of the United Nations throughout its years of existence place great expectations on its performance in the twenty-first century. Our ability to strengthen the Organization to respond to new challenges depends on the historic commitment that we are able to offer today to the Organization and to collective action for the benefit of a universal project of change, understanding and cooperation. Overturning the negative trends of globalization is the new challenge of the United Nations.

Working hard for the overall development of its nation, Ecuador firmly appeals to international cooperation for the implementation of programmes aimed at debt alleviation and reduction of the external debt for developing countries that are highly indebted. Debt-servicing, consuming over 50 per cent of the national budget in some countries, conspires against the implementation of health, education, employment and environmental programmes and programmes for the well-being of the poorest segments of the population. Ecuador urgently calls for agreements to forgive the heavy external debt. Moreover, emphasis must also be placed on international financing for development on a foreseeable and continued basis. We must also ensure effective assistance through the resources of international institutions.

With regard to efforts to renew the United Nations, Ecuador also attaches priority to the reform of the Security Council in its composition and its working methods. Its primary mission in maintaining international peace and security requires adaptations to correct imbalances in its present composition so as to improve decision-making mechanisms and to give greater transparency to its proceedings.

I am pleased to reaffirm at this Summit Ecuador's firmest support for the multilateral system of international relations and for this universal Organization, the United Nations. We have begun a new millennium and the hope of humankind to live in a more secure, just and democratic world, depending on the shared action of all countries, which puts our universal political will, solidarity and commitment to the test.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Joaquim Alberto Chissano, President of the Republic of Mozambique.

President Chissano: It was with great pride and satisfaction that we in Mozambique received the Secretary-General's report on the Millennium Assembly and realized that it touches upon the most pressing challenges faced by the peoples of the world today. These include the promotion of a culture of peace within and among nations and among regions throughout the world, for this will allow the accomplishment of all other objectives such as poverty eradication, development, human rights, promotion and protection, as well as meeting the challenges of globalization. Developing countries, particularly the least developed ones, are facing serious difficulties in their efforts to integrate themselves into the world economy. By liberalizing trade and finance, the globalization process has exposed the poor countries to powerful external forces and has driven them to marginalization and exclusion. This results in serious economic asymmetries, leading to a widening gap between the rich North and the poor South, not only in economic terms, but also in terms of technology and knowledge, a trend leading to greater inequalities.

The alarming figures on poverty in the Secretary-General's report are indeed embarrassing to us as world leaders. Looking at the stage of development the world

has reached today, with some societies living in conditions of extreme abundance, the prevalence of absolute poverty in the world is morally unacceptable. We have to reverse the current trend in the international economic system and create one which brings about justice, equal opportunities and benefits for all peoples in the world. If the scourge of poverty is not addressed, it can shake the very foundations of the current international system. We therefore call upon the international community to harness and manage the globalization phenomenon in order to ensure that all peoples of the world benefit from it.

External debt is a major obstacle to the economic growth and sustainable development of developing countries. While we welcome the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) and the Cologne initiatives, as well as other mechanisms for debt relief, we are convinced that unconditional debt cancellation could enable us to redirect resources to poverty eradication, the improvement of social sectors and the rehabilitation of basic infrastructures. Debt cancellation needs to be supplemented by better access to world markets, the provision of adequate development assistance, and foreign direct investments.

We consider the eradication of infectious diseases such as malaria, tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS a key issue for the development and security of the developing countries, especially of the African countries. In my country, we have established a national committee that involves all stakeholders in the implementation of the programme to combat HIV/AIDS.

The advancement of knowledge, science and technology — in particular information and communication technology — are essential for economic growth and development. The lack of access to technology widens the gap between developed and developing countries. Therefore, technology should be made available to developing countries at affordable prices, with adequate human capacity-building to enable them to appropriate and further develop it to the benefit of their peoples.

Our desires and aspirations can be realized only in a stable and peaceful environment. It is essential that efforts be intensified in the search for genuine disarmament, including the total destruction of weapons of mass destruction, particularly nuclear weapons. Illicit trade in small arms and light weapons should be prevented through concerted international efforts.

The role of the United Nations in the maintenance of peace and international security must be strengthened. The Security Council has to be democratized.

I would like to take this historic opportunity to express my sincere gratitude and that of the people of Mozambique to individual countries and the international community as a whole for the response and support provided to us during the devastating floods in which many lives were lost and infrastructures destroyed. Although factors beyond our control have conditioned its pace, we have already started with the post-flood reconstruction. I am happy to report that most families that were displaced by the floods have been resettled in safe areas. We thank the international community for the efforts deployed to assist us in this phase of reconstruction.

Mozambique has, to a large extent, experienced the positive impact of an effective and coordinated action by the United Nations and the international community at large, in times both of peace and of conflict. It is our earnest hope that the United Nations will be reformed as soon as possible and strengthened in such a way that its effectiveness is enhanced. The implementation of the decisions to be adopted at this historic Summit requires the establishment of follow-up mechanisms or reinforcement of the existing ones.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Nursultan Nazarbaev, President of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

President Nazarbaev (*spoke in Russian*): It is quite clear that the new millennium not only is bringing us global changes but that it also marks a watershed in the existence of humankind. There is no question that globalization is a dominant and irreversible trend of our time. However, today it is also unquestionable that globalization, which is shaping the contours of the new world order and is clearly a manifestation of progress, can also have quite a few negative implications for many, if not most, States.

There are a number of factors at play here, chief among them being the stark inequality between States of the world community. This is reflected even in the words we use on a daily basis to express the varying

degree of that inequality. Thus, we speak of "rich" and "poor" States, "developed" and "economically backward" States, nations endowed with a resource potential and those that have already exhausted it, and so forth.

Inequality also manifests itself in the pattern of resource consumption. Developed countries, known to account for 20 per cent of the world's population, consume 80 per cent of global resources. There is also a widely known forecast to the effect that, given the current pace of development, the global economy over the next few decades can provide employment for only 20 per cent of the world's able-bodied population. And this is only one of the global challenges of the new millennium.

In this context, I believe that both the United Nations and national Governments must make mutual commitments. First, each country should clearly and responsibly define its position with respect to globalization processes in order to envision and, as far as possible, neutralize their possible negative manifestations. Secondly, as part of its work to modernize its activity, the United Nations could undertake the priority task of developing a model of globalization that would integrate to the fullest degree the interests of all marginalized countries. At the same time, it should more adequately address the concerns of most peoples in the developed countries, since the disparities within those countries will inevitably continue to grow. This model should also incorporate measures to enhance the effectiveness of existing security systems and develop new ones that would meet the demands of our times. It is no secret that, despite some major accomplishments, the United Nations has not always been successful in addressing the challenges of maintaining peace and security.

In this regard, along with enhancing the peacemaking potential of the United Nations, first and foremost of the Security Council, it could be a very promising endeavour to utilize the potential of regional security systems and to promote cooperation with them. There is no doubt that such arrangements as the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe or the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-building Measures in Asia, which is already taking concrete shape, or the Shanghai Five, could in many cases function quite efficiently. The active involvement of regional security systems in the processes of maintaining stability and security could also help take the edge off the problem of humanitarian intervention. With their assistance and the support of the Security Council, many conflicts could be resolved without gross interference in the internal affairs of sovereign States.

A pressing need to develop such approaches is demonstrated, among other things, by the process currently under way in Asia. Afghanistan has become one of the sore point spots of the world. More than 20 years after the intervention of the Soviet troops, the long-suffering people of this country continue to experience all the horrors of war. The instability and poverty in this country have turned its territory into a breeding ground for extremism and international terrorism, spreading not only in Central Asia but throughout the world. Afghanistan produces up to 3,000 tons of raw opium annually, which is then processed and shipped to Europe and the United States.

At their recent meeting in Bishkek, the leaders of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, as well as Russia, discussed this problem and called on the United Nations and the world community to provide their countries assistance in normalizing this situation. We believe it is necessary to convene a special meeting of the Security Council devoted to the situation in Afghanistan and Central Asia to develop practical measures to stabilize the situation.

The threat of nuclear proliferation could also be included on its agenda, since a strong confrontation has developed among some nuclear-weapons States. A number of countries of the region are at the threshold of acquiring these weapons. After the disintegration of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Kazakhstan inherited a huge arsenal of nuclear weapons. Our country has set a precedent by a voluntary renouncing of this arsenal. That is why today we again call on all nuclear-weapon States to take concrete measures to eliminate nuclear arms.

As an improvement of the activity of the United Nations in the era of globalization, we believe it would be advisable to promote within its structure such institutions which, on the basis of a global analysis of the situation, could provide early warning about emerging conflicts, formulate recommendations for early intervention and prevent military solutions to conflicts while effectively promoting preventive diplomacy. Such institutions could become an

irreplaceable tool for addressing social and economic problems that are the source of instability.

In late 1943, at the Teheran Conference, where the question of the future world order was first discussed, a great American, President of the United States Franklin Roosevelt, addressed the participants in the Conference with these words:

> "We have differing customs and philosophies and ways of life ... But we have proved here in Teheran that the varying ideals of our nations can come together in a harmonious whole, moving unitedly for the common good of ourselves and of the world."

I think that this statement is relevant for us too, as we stand on the threshold of the twenty-first century, a century of dramatic changes, a century of globalization which, we all hope, will bring common good to humanity as a whole.

The world has become a global and interdependent place where global partnership should become an overriding principle.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Abdoulaye Wade, President of the Republic of Senegal.

President Wade (*spoke in French*): On this historic occasion where the United Nations community is meeting to celebrate the advent of a new millennium and to reflect together on what should be the role and place of the Organization in the twenty-first century, I wish to bring you a solemn message of peace and friendship from the people of Senegal, and at the same time to express, once again, our deep attachment to the noble ideals enshrined in the United Nations Charter.

I wish above all to pay strong tribute to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Kofi Annan, for the courage, competence and lucidity which he has displayed in the exercise of his mandate. The report he submitted to us provides us with a broad range of ideas and relevant proposals, providing a consensus view of the United Nations, firmly committed to the pillars of its Charter, and at the same time, better equipped and adapted to the changing realities of the world.

For my part, I wish to take up here three aspects of the problems faced by the United Nations. The first challenge is that of establishing global and sustainable peace and security between nations, but also within the nations themselves — security going hand in hand with the elimination of war, violence, hunger, thirst, oppression, poverty and debt.

The Member States have a prime responsibility to create the minimum conditions for "a world free of fear", according to the words of the Secretary-General. Let us therefore agree to establish a world based on the acceptance of the universality of the principles of democracy, the sovereign right of peoples to freely and democratically choose their leaders, the renunciation of violence as a method of gaining and maintaining power, and the rule of law, the promotion and protection of human rights throughout the world, without any discrimination of gender, race or religion.

In this regard, I am thinking of all those minorities, somewhere in the world, whose cultures and rights are still being scorned, including their right to live as free citizens.

Decades ago, I had a dream that Africa would cross into the twenty-first century free of all dictatorial or personal power, and with a rich mosaic of genuine democracies, differing only in their cultural elements. We need to recognize, however, that instances of real change, which includes changes in leadership and elections, can be counted on the fingers of one hand.

The second aspect in the United Nations problems adds a complementary dimension to those of peace and security, and this is social and economic development — development in a world which is transforming on a global level. And here too, I wish, as before, to mention the debt, this infernal mechanism which developed countries have locked us into. Each generation works to pay off the debts incurred by previous generations, as well as debts of its own, debts for which it is difficult to see any significant trace in Africa.

The drama of the debt is not that it will neither be paid back or cancelled, because these always happen. The debt is a recurring disease which will always come back if the profound causes are not eradicated. It seems something like an indecency, or even a challenge to common reason, to consider debt development the only possible choice for our countries.

At the Lomé Summit, the Organization of African Unity (OAU) decided to establish the African Union and to take up the question of debt relief for Africa.

The world has to cease being a world where paternalist creditors are facing shivering, timid debtors, who only dare to ask for more time or debt cancellation, whereas they are the victims of an unjust system. The science of economics, supported by a profound feeling of solidarity and interdependence, should lead the international community to share the feeling so well expressed by John Fitzgerald Kennedy — "a free society which is unable to help its poor majority will not be able to save its rich minority".

These issues are reflected in the decision of the OAU to create the African Union. I am happy to announce that Senegal has ratified this agreement, and was the second nation to do so.

The third and last element of response is linked to reform of the United Nations, that the Secretary-General presented in a bold programme for renewal. I feel that the one of the first demands of reform lies in increasing the number of permanent and non-permanent members of the Security Council, and in the improvement of the working methods of the Council.

It is in all our interests that the Council be more representative of the international community, which requires the reform of the Security Council, the strengthening of the rule of the General Assembly, the rationalization of the work of the other organs, as well as the simplification of the institutional mechanisms and administrative procedures.

Beyond the symbolism of passing from one century to another and from one millennium to the next, we are today at the crossroads and have no other choice but to embark on the path of hope, which leads through the consolidation of multilateralism and universalism. As we meet here today, the daily realities of the world remind us yet again of the unfulfilled nature of our ambitious mission to build peace and promote development throughout our planet.

We cannot fail. We should not fail, because humanity has accumulated an unprecedented stock of scientific knowledge, technical know-how and technologies able to produce way beyond our needs. Good sense rejects the idea of poverty in a world where global wealth is so abundant that, beyond any concept of redistribution, the elimination of waste alone would most probably eradicate hunger and the lack of humanity's basic needs on most of the planet.

In the face of what borders on intellectual blindness, I wish to express my hope for the emergence of a new rationalism, such as that of the eighteenth century. I myself will seek membership in that society without borders, where absurdity will be abolished and intelligence and the rule of reason, which are optimally distributed among peoples, will be promoted. Just as we speak of the age of enlightenment, we might also refer to the millennium of enlightenment. In the meanwhile, however, may the Lord help and guide us on our way.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Kim Dae-jung, President of the Republic of Korea.

President Kim (*spoke in Korean; interpretation furnished by the delegation*): It is a great privilege for me to have this opportunity to speak in this honoured Hall of peace.

The new millennium is beginning with a miracle on the Korean peninsula. Warm sunshine has begun to melt the wall of ice that has stood between the South and North during the past 55 years of cold-war division. Members must have seen some of the televised scenes of the South-North Korean summit in June, as well as of the separated families reuniting on 15 August for the first time in all those years of national division. They were miraculous and were brought about not only through the efforts of South and North Korea, the principal parties, but also through the steadfast support and encouragement of the United Nations and the leaders of the world. I thank them all wholeheartedly.

Furthermore, I am greatly encouraged by and deeply grateful for the decision of the Co-Chairpersons of our historic gathering to issue a statement in support of the South-North Joint Declaration that the inter-Korean summit produced.

Upon my inauguration two and a half years ago, I embarked upon my sunshine policy in pursuit of inter-Korean peace, reconciliation and cooperation. Since then, the policy has won the support of the United Nations and all countries of the world. In the summit discussions, I and my North Korean counterpart resolved to work together to ensure that there shall

never be another war on the Korean peninsula. We agreed that unification neither by force nor by absorption is acceptable, as both would only lead to war.

We agreed that, while the aspiration towards unification through self-determination will continue to guide us, our efforts for now must focus on bringing lasting peace to the Korean peninsula and promoting economic and sociocultural exchanges and cooperation between the two sides. These efforts are already under way in many areas.

Unification is the ultimate goal of the Korean people. However, unification must be achieved peacefully, no matter how long it takes. Unification must be a success for both sides. This was the agreement reached at the South-North Korean summit. Through exchanges of summit visits and continued ministerial talks, we will do all that we can to expand inter-Korean exchanges and cooperation and to make a peace to last on the Korean peninsula. Such advances on the Korean peninsula will greatly contribute to peace in north-east Asia and the world.

As long as we have the United Nations leading the global support for our efforts on behalf of peace, with the active backing of all the leaders here, the miracle of the new millennium unfolding on the Korean peninsula will become a great achievement for history. In the most earnest terms, I ask representatives for their abiding attention and support.

In the twentieth century, the United Nations achieved shining advances for peace and human welfare. Were it not for the United Nations, how much more would humankind have suffered from wars, calamities and infringements upon human rights. Indeed, I harbour no doubt that the establishment of the United Nations was humanity's greatest feat of the twentieth century.

In the twenty-first century, however, there will be many and even greater missions for the global body to accomplish. Numerous challenges await, such as the realization of world peace, assistance for the economic growth of the developing countries, the promotion of human rights, combating terrorism, and the preservation of the earth's environment. These missions must all be successfully accomplished.

I appeal to all: let us join hands to make the twenty-first century the most peaceful and hopeful period in the history of humankind. Let us do so by having the countries of the world rally around the United Nations. I assure them that the Republic of Korea will render all the cooperation it can as the United Nations carries out its noble roles.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Alija Izetbegovic, President of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

President Izetbegovic: First, let me thank the United Nations for organizing this historical gathering. We extend our congratulations to all those contributing. We fully endorse the efforts for a more efficient Organization of the United Nations that would successfully promote the values contained in the draft declaration of the Millennium Summit.

Compared to our long and rich history, the dawn of the new millennium closes an extremely difficult and painful decade for Bosnia and Herzegovina. The first half of the decade was marked by a battle for independence and the other half by the reconstruction of the country and its institutions after a bloody and devastating war. The country and the peoples have survived, but at a terrible and unnecessary price.

The future of Bosnia and Herzegovina depends largely on three factors: first, the integration of Bosnia and Herzegovina from within; secondly, the integration of Bosnia and Herzegovina as a whole into the Euro-Atlantic institutions; and, thirdly, on further regional developments overall.

The integration from within is a painful and slow process, but it is headed in the right direction. I am happy to affirm the good will of ordinary people to reconcile and to move forward. The problems are in the lack of commitment on the part of some politicians. As a consequence, too many of our refugees are still waiting to return to their homes and some remnants of apartheid are still present.

We who signed the Dayton/Paris Peace Agreement to establish peace have always understood it to be imperfect. However, we also believed it to be evolutionary and a process that would establish Bosnia and Herzegovina as a democratic and open member of the family of European countries. Our integration into the Euro-Atlantic institutions — from the Council of Europe to the Partnership for Peace and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) — ensures a stable future for our overall region as well. That

process of integration is the source of our hopes. It enhances this necessary evolution and encourages the vision of a common future for our peoples. However, in the alternative, if the people feel that they are not welcome as full partners in a borderless Europe, the demarcation lines in our region will become ever more pronounced.

In Dayton, our priority was to stop the killing, because there had been too much death. We believed that an imperfect peace would be better than a just war and that the natural integration of Bosnia and Herzegovina into the Euro-Atlantic family would help to overcome the shortcomings of such an initially unjust, as well as imperfect, peace.

Finally, the future of Bosnia and Herzegovina also depends on regional developments, and vice versa. Most recent developments in Croatia have shown how quickly things can change in a positive direction. We would like to see similar positive events with our neighbour to the east. In Montenegro democracy and the recognition of past mistakes go hand in hand. The relationship between our two countries reflects new feelings of goodwill and mutual interests.

We in Bosnia and Herzegovina are very proud to contribute an integrated police force from Bosnia and Herzegovina to the international peacekeeping effort in East Timor. Here I join others in expressing our dismay at the deaths of United Nations personnel in Timor.

Allow me to conclude this short statement on a more personal note. My function in the presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina ends this October, after 10 years of service. I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to all sincere friends of Bosnia and Herzegovina who were with us in the time of war and in the time of peace, and who have always supported the just cause of Bosnia and Herzegovina. I assure the Assembly of the readiness of my country to contribute to the common well-being in order to build a better and more just world. As a crossroads of civilizations, cultures and religions — Orthodox Christianity, Catholicism, Judaism and Islam — we can contribute much to a new dialogue and culture of peace. Our example teaches what should and should not be done. It is both a positive and negative lesson for future generations.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Francisco Guillermo Flores Pérez, President of the Republic of El Salvador.

President Flores Pérez (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the United Nations, through the Secretary-General, for the proposal at the beginning of this year that the agenda for this Summit should be that of tackling the world's problems. I have discussed that proposal with my Latin American colleagues at various forums, and extend deserved recognition to Mr. Annan for it.

I find in the proposal an appeal to the more developed nations regarding the very acute poverty in which many nations and a large part of the world's population live. If that appeal means a call to solidarity as part of a concept of a global conscience that understands that the problems of others are also our own, then I completely support it. But if it is based on the premise that poor nations exist through the fault of rich nations, then I cannot agree with it. When the attitude of a poor nation towards the world is to blame developed countries for its poverty, then there is a transfer of responsibility that in the end closes off any possibility for that nation to emerge from its poverty. The only possible way for a poor nation to move ahead is to assume full responsibility for confronting its poverty.

We in El Salvador are living in a time of profound transformation because of a successful peace process and a reorientation of our country. The triumphs have been ours, as we were the ones who made peace. But the problems are also ours, as we were the ones who made war. The only way in which we can overcome our problems is by accepting them in full. The same applies to the individual who blames his Government for his present living conditions, while forgetting his personal responsibilities. By transferring to others the responsibility that is ours we block any possibility for change.

We Salvadorans are the architects of our own destiny. Ours are the triumphs and ours are the failures. In our experience, assigning blame in the end promotes an assistance mentality whose most pernicious expression is the temptation of many aid programmes to carry out social engineering experiments within a reality that they do not understand at all. We are therefore not asking the world to solve our problems. What we are asking for is an opportunity to participate on equal terms in development processes.

The policies of openness promoted by industrialized countries and international agencies are valid as long as they mean openness for everyone. If industrialized countries view less developed countries only as consumer markets and close their own markets to our own capacity to produce, they create a distortion that will in the end affect all nations. Salvadoran farmers use all the products produced by industrialized countries. It is absolutely intolerable for the industrialized world to tell them that they cannot sell in the countries of the industrialized world the fruits, vegetables and cereals they produce through their own labour.

There is no better opportunity than this historic gathering to correct that distortion. All that is needed is our determination to raise relations between countries to the level of dignity required for a shared future. Openness is the only sustainable link between us, as it is only on the basis of our production that we can generate the resources to combat poverty. I therefore view that commitment and opportunity with the utmost optimism.

If inhabitants of Europe had been told that they were living during the Renaissance, they would probably have answered in a perplexed manner that the only thing they were living was the daily shared problems of their existence at the time. It may be that we ourselves are today living through another Renaissance, one characterized by a burst of creativity in almost all areas of human knowledge. If so, it would be an enormous waste if we, the leaders of the world, were to apply our energies to grim, apocalyptic visions regarding the threats that will confront mankind. Maybe the most productive way of employing our time would be to dedicate ourselves to effectively managing the world's current potential in an active and responsible spirit of optimism, understanding that today we have tools to move our countries forward that we never had before.

Progress is knowledge and decision — and this is denied to no one.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Hipólito Mejía Domínguez, Constitutional President of the Dominican Republic.

President Mejía Domínguez (*spoke in Spanish*): The proposal to convene this Summit could not have been better timed or more auspicious, in that it offers an opportunity for the community of nations to engage in a fruitful process of reflection on how to meet the challenges and needs of the new millennium.

Deliberating on the role of the United Nations in the twenty-first century means defining the expectations which Governments must try to fulfil at the international level, in a world that is calling increasingly for the practice of certain values in order to promote effective solidarity among all the peoples of the earth.

We Heads of Government should all thank the Secretary-General of the United Nations for organizing this meeting and giving us this opportunity to deliberate on the issues covered extensively in the report which he has presented to this Millennium Summit.

Only a few days ago, on 16 August, I had the honour to be inaugurated as Constitutional President of the Dominican Republic. I have come to this high-level meeting, therefore, to very briefly describe some of the hopes and aspirations of the Dominican people.

Dignity of the human person, equality between men and women, social progress to improve living conditions, poverty eradication, a life of peace and hope without fear — these, briefly, are the aspirations and hopes of the Dominican people and the general framework within which the Dominican Government expresses its willingness and its determination to ensure that, in our country, the process of globalization of all humankind's cultural manifestations that characterizes this new millennium will have a genuinely human face.

While immersing ourselves in globalization and the market economy, we will never relinquish the demands of equity and social justice that flow from our hopes and aspirations.

If much-vaunted macroeconomic equilibrium is to be truly beneficial and equitable, then what we need are effective State institutions, transparent management of public affairs, respect for human rights, universal participation in decision-making on issues of universal concern and the creation of a sound physical infrastructure.

Only when we are able to design policies aimed at achieving those goals will we be in a proper position to join and operate in the global economy on competitive, equal terms. This, I repeat, is the attitude

which defines the aspirations and hopes of the present Government of the Dominican Republic.

My presence at this Summit is proof and confirmation of my country's faith in this Organization, of which the Dominican Republic has been a member since 1945. The Secretary-General's report, which seeks to define the role of the United Nations in the twenty-first century, is guided by an obvious commitment to reform and democracy. That is because, while the principles of the Charter of the United Nations have, over time, proved to be valid and, on many occasions, effective, it must be admitted that the power structures created for it in 1945 cannot meet the demands of the international relations that have evolved from the globalization process. Now, more than ever, this Organization must serve to strike the right balance among all the States of the earth.

Moreover, the necessary reform of the Charter of the United Nations must ensure that the globalization process benefits everyone, thereby transforming solidarity into a norm of international conduct that helps to uphold the general interest of the whole of humankind.

We are surely all agreed that the main responsibility for upholding the general interest and seeking to ensure the happiness of our peoples rests primarily with us and with the Governments which we lead, but it is not denying that responsibility to point out that often, both in the past and nowadays, our own guilt has been compounded by the guilty complicity of certain international interests.

On the basis of these considerations, I shall now refer to the situation currently faced by the Republic of Haiti and the Dominican Republic. We have often described the relationship between our two countries as a marriage with no possibility of divorce. We realize that it is basically Haiti's economic situation that is causing the daily influx of illegal immigrants from that country to ours, but the international community must also realize that the Dominican Republic does not have the capacity to shoulder the social burden represented by the presence of hundreds of thousands of our Haitian neighbours in our territory.

Our Government is doing its utmost to deal with this situation in a spirit of understanding and absolute respect for human rights. Any incidents that may be occurring in the border area are not part of a State policy, and I can assure you that we have taken steps to deal with any troublesome situation.

The Government of the Dominican Republic is fully prepared to undertake jointly with Haiti development plans that will help to raise the standard of living of the residents of both countries.

The Dominican Republic will have an immigration law that is based on rational principles, applicable to all aliens without distinction living legally or illegally in its territory. However, it cannot solve on its own a problem that concerns all of us and which only a collective decision and collective participation can help to solve definitively. I therefore appeal to the United Nations and my fellow Heads of State to assume our collective responsibility for tackling this serious situation.

As I said earlier, the time has come for solidarity, and it is we Governments that must vow that the United Nations, faced with the process of globalization, will be the guarantor of the healthy material and spiritual development of all peoples and that the United Nations will be an implacable judge against violence, insecurity, prejudice and environmental degradation. Only thus, sharing the same hopes and aspirations, will we have peace.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Paul Kagame, President of the Rwandese Republic.

President Kagame: With regard to the character of the United Nations in the twenty-first century, we share the general view that this noble institution is in need of renewal and reform to enable it to enjoy wider legitimacy. In carrying out that task, equal weight and urgency should be given to reforming other principal institutions, including the Bretton Woods institutions. The United Nations system and those institutions are now faced with a far more complex social, economic and political environment than existed when they were founded more than 50 years ago.

In Rwanda's view, however, it is the issue of threats to peace that requires the most urgent attention. It is apparent that we are less threatened by world wars but are confronted by regional and localized conflicts and tensions. We need therefore to pose a question in that regard. Why have preventive and peacekeeping efforts been less than successful over the past decade? Many reasons have been put forward, including, for

example, lack of political will, ill-defined mandates, lack of means, and so on.

Those reasons may all be valid, but I want to add one more factor. That is, each conflict is unique in its history and in its sociology, something that does not often receive the attention it deserves. Nothing short of objective understanding of each conflict and its nature can contribute to its management and eventual resolution. If the case of Rwanda may be cited, an additional shortcoming is the inability or unwillingness to assist countries in post-conflict situations. international agencies seem more effective in reacting to humanitarian crises, but are wholly inadequate in assisting affected countries in the aftermath of conflicts. Yet, equally difficult challenges lie in the post-crisis phases, particularly in terms of economic and social reconstruction processes to permit sustainable development and thus to prevent further cycles of violence.

Permit me now to make a few remarks on the relationship between the United Nations and my country. Until its independence, Rwanda was administered as a United Nations trusteeship. The United Nations has since, to a greater or lesser extent, been associated with major political events in my country. As has been widely observed, the 1994 genocide in Rwanda must go down as one of the darkest hours in the more than 50-year history of the United Nations. It was in the aftermath of that event that the International Tribunal for Rwanda was created, and we support it in its commendable undertakings. Let me take this opportunity to thank the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, for commissioning a report on what happened in Rwanda in 1994. I congratulate the committee that undertook that assignment, led by the former Prime Minister of Sweden, Mr. Ingvar Carlsson. Submitted to the Security Council, and discussed by the Council on 14 April 2000, that painstaking report (S/1999/1257, annex), which speaks for itself, is clear in identifying responsibilities and ways and means of assisting Rwanda in its reconstruction programmes. Let me take this opportunity also to pay tribute to the Organization of African Unity (OAU) Panel of Eminent Persons, under the leadership of President Masire, which arrived at conclusions similar to those of the Carlsson report.

The people of Rwanda have, since 1994, sought to rebuild their society under most difficult and challenging conditions. My Government is doing its best to address these. But the task is not an easy one. We have made progress, thanks to the Rwandan people and to our partnership with bilateral and multilateral international agencies. Both the Carlson and OAU reports have recommended to their respective institutions ways to make this partnership effective. We look forward to the implementation of those recommendations; Rwanda will continue to play its part.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Fidel Castro Ruz, President of the Council of State and of the Government of the Republic of Cuba.

President Castro (*spoke in Spanish*): Chaos rules in our world, both within borders and beyond them. Arbitrary laws are proffered as divine norms that will bring the peace, order, well-being and security that our planet so badly needs: that is what they would have us all believe. Three dozen developed and wealthy nations that monopolize economic, technological and political power have joined us here to offer us more of the same recipes that have succeeded only in making us ever poorer, more exploited, and more dependent.

There is no discussion whatsoever of a radical reform of this worn-out institution — born more than half a century ago when there were but a few independent countries — to transform it into a body that truly represents the interests of all the peoples of the world, an institution in which no one would have the frustrating and anti-democratic right of veto, and to undertake a healthy process of expanding the membership of the Security Council and enhancing its representativeness as an executive body subordinate to the General Assembly, which is the organ that should take the decisions on such crucial issues as intervention and the use of force. It must be firmly stated that the principle of sovereignty cannot be sacrificed to an exploitative and unfair order in which a hegemonic super-Power, backed by its own might, seeks to have its say on everything. That, Cuba will never accept.

The poverty and underdevelopment prevailing in the vast majority of nations as well as the inequality in the distribution of wealth and knowledge in the world are basically at the source of the present conflicts. It cannot be overlooked that the current underdevelopment and poverty are the consequences of the conquest, the colonization, the enslavement and the plundering of most countries of the planet by the

colonial Powers, of the emergence of imperialism and of the bloody wars to divide up the world in new ways. Today, it is the aggressor countries' moral obligation to compensate our nations for the damages they caused throughout centuries.

Humanity should be aware of what we have been so far and what we cannot continue to be. Our species has now enough accumulated knowledge, ethical values and scientific resources to move towards a new historical era of true justice and humanism.

Nothing in the existing economic and political order serves the interests of humankind. Thus this order is unsustainable and must be changed. Suffice it to say that the world has already more than 6 billion inhabitants, 80 per cent of whom live in poverty. Ages-old diseases of the third world — diseases such as malaria, tuberculosis and others equally lethal — have not been eradicated, while new epidemics like AIDS threaten to exterminate the population of entire nations. Meanwhile, wealthy countries keep devoting enormous amounts of money to military expenses and to buy luxury items, and a voracious plague of speculators exchange currencies, stocks and other real or fictitious values for trillions of dollars every day.

Nature is being devastated. The climate is changing under our own eyes, and drinking water is increasingly contaminated or scarce. The seas, a source of human sustenance, are being depleted, and crucial non-renewable resources are being wasted on luxury and vanities.

Everyone understands that the United Nations basic role in the new century now upon us is to save the world not only from war but also from underdevelopment, hunger, diseases, poverty and the destruction of the natural resources indispensable to human life. And the United Nations must do this promptly — before it is too late.

The dream of having truly fair and sensible norms to guide human destiny seems impossible to many. However, we are convinced that the struggle for the impossible should be the motto of this institution that brings us together today.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): I thank the President of the Council of State and of the Government of the Republic of Cuba.

The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency El Hadj Omar Bongo, President of the Gabonese Republic.

President Bongo (*spoke in French*): At this time when the nations of the world that we represent here are preparing to launch headlong into the third millennium, it is appropriate to reflect together on the future role the United Nations will play in meeting our new challenges.

I would like, therefore, to welcome and congratulate both of you — eminent individuals — who have been chosen to co-chair, in the spirit of solidarity and complementarity, this historic Summit. Allow me also to congratulate the Secretary-General for the relevant proposals that he has brought to our attention. They well serve to remind us of the large problems facing the world today. I am thinking here of the armed conflicts, AIDS and poverty that are seriously threatening the stability and development of our nations — in Africa in particular.

The conflicts that Africa is experiencing have gone on for so many years that we can talk about a permanent state of war. These conflicts disrupt our social, family, cultural and environmental balance. They destabilize our economies, compromise our development, hamper our freedoms and give rise to true humanitarian disasters.

In Africa humanitarian action is only in its infancy. We need to develop it with the ongoing support of the United Nations institutions and of the Member States, as well as with the support of the international-level non-governmental organizations which are already providing us valuable assistance.

Another problem that is threatening the stability of the continent is AIDS, which is attacking our workforce and the very structure of our societies. The fight against AIDS requires more intense international cooperation to adapt the prevention, treatment and scientific research programmes to the urgency and breadth of the task. Here I would just like to make an urgent appeal to facilitate access to care.

I feel convinced that our efforts to build a more peaceful and prosperous world will be successful if we continue to integrate them in a global logic of development. It is, moreover, in this spirit that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights attaches as much importance to economic, social and cultural

rights as it does to civil and political freedoms. It is thus of the greatest importance that the international community take the concerns of the vulnerable strata of our societies into greater consideration.

Another challenge that we need to meet is developing and providing access to science and new technologies. Here too, Africa, more than any other region of the world, will need special support.

The reform of our Organization fully falls within the current global context whose chief characteristic on the economic level is globalization. It also falls into the political framework through the march of values and democratic practice on all continents.

In our desire to give new dynamism to the United Nations, this democracy, representative of the majority and respectful of the minorities, must inspire our thinking. It is why I would not wish to conclude my statement without mentioning here Security Council reform. Indeed, 14 October 1977, at this very rostrum, as the then President of the Organization of African Unity, I asked that Africa have permanent representation on the Security Council. I call for the realization of this proposal, and I was very pleased to hear my brother, President Wade, speaking along these lines.

I conclude my statement on this note, convinced that as a result of this Summit, our Organization will emerge strengthened and more effective and that new and stronger solidarity will be born among States and the peoples.

The Acting Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Glafcos Clerides, President of the Republic of Cyprus.

President Clerides (Cyprus): The Millennium Assembly, which rightly has gathered here an unprecedented number of heads of State and Government, is indeed a truly historic event. It is a significant effort to mobilize the forces of international cooperation at the highest possible level, an effort which we sincerely hope will give a strong impetus to the desire of humankind to construct a more just and secure world that will guarantee the survival, development and prosperity of the peoples of our planet.

Allow me to express my congratulations to those who initially conceived the idea of the Millennium Assembly, and to thank particularly His Excellency the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Kofi Annan, for his thought-provoking report entitled "We the peoples". We look forward to an action-oriented final document of this important meeting, which will provide the blueprint for our common efforts in addressing the challenges that lie ahead.

We recognize that despite the many positive developments that have occurred on many fronts, ruthless conflicts, poverty and inequality are still commonplace in the world. The spread of endemic diseases should be a major call for mobilization for all of us. The principles of justice and international law should prevail when conflicts arise. Respect of human dignity and rights should be indiscriminate and unquestionable, while fundamental freedoms should be firmly embedded in all societies.

Globalization has accelerated the proliferation of global transactions, the increase in productivity, trade, technological advances and foreign investment. It has, however, created new challenges such as the widening of the gap between rich and poor, including the digital divide, the expansion of criminal networks and the illicit trafficking in narcotics and arms around the world.

The benefits of globalization need to be equally distributed around the world. The gap between rich and poor needs to be bridged before it widens even more. The greatest possible emphasis should be given to the needs of those less privileged, who are daily faced with the spectre of hunger, disease and the lack of opportunities. This is clearly in the interest of an increasingly interdependent world. It should not be forgotten that inequalities inexorably lead to conflicts.

The heavy burden of external debt is a major cause of concern for many countries. Imaginative policies of debt relief is a necessary component of any effort to secure poverty eradication.

The second part of the twentieth century has seen an international effort to protect human rights. Progress has been registered. However, we have a long way to go in order to fulfil this lofty goal. Despite the recent economic growth and social progress, hundreds of millions of people still live in poverty and misery. The natural resources of the planet are rapidly being depleted while the environment is continually degraded. Many countries lack access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation. Unemployment and income

inequality contribute to the deterioration of the fabric of many nations.

In particular, we should focus our efforts on securing the rights and setting the ground for greater advancement of less fortunate groups of our citizens. In this context, further efforts should be initiated in the areas of gender equality and children's rights, particularly of those children who so often pay a disproportionately high price in areas of armed conflict. We should institute effective policies in the pursuit of youth employment, as well as policies for disabled people who constitute one sixth of our planet's citizenry and who should have the opportunity to become fully engaged in, and contribute to, the development of our societies.

We deeply feel the pain and agony of the families of missing persons all over the world and in my own country, who are waiting to be informed of the fate of their missing loved ones in a convincing manner. Solutions based on political expediencies or considerations cannot give answers to this problem, the very existence of which constitutes an affront to the conscience of humanity. Humanitarian spirit, commitment and action by those who are in a position to give an answer to the relatives are what is needed.

From this forum, I wish to add my voice and strongly appeal to all concerned to cooperate in the struggle to end the agony and uncertainty of the relatives of each and every missing person.

The proliferation of armed conflict calls for our immediate attention. The ravages of war are nowhere more evident than in Africa, where the continuous outbreak of conflicts stands as a major obstacle to progress. Our Assembly should send a strong message regarding the need for a sustained policy of conflict prevention, peace-building, reconciliation and international cooperation.

While one often sees a tendency to pursue a "pragmatic" approach for the settlement of disputes, nevertheless it is our firm belief that the United Nations should always act based on the solid foundation of the principles of its Charter. This kind of approach will gain the confidence of its Members with regard to its objectivity and fairness and will lead to permanent solutions.

The Organization should always be a beacon of hope for small States that look to it for justice and by concrete actions should alleviate their fears that political expediency, so often associated with the exercise of power politics, will not prevail over international law.

Security Council resolutions must be respected and implemented to safeguard international legality, so that the concept of collective security will sink deeply into our collective consciousness and find its practical application in full respect for the principles of the United Nations Charter.

There is no more flagrant example of this failure in implementing resolutions adopted by the General Assembly and the Security Council than the case of Cyprus, where numerous resolutions have remained unimplemented for over a quarter of a century. This failure constitutes nothing less than an affront to the international community and a glaring example of the prevalence of impunity.

We are now engaged in yet another effort to solve the Cyprus problem. I will participate in the forthcoming negotiation, as always, with good will and determination to find a just and viable solution within the parameters established by the United Nations resolutions, a solution that will meet the interests of, and restore and safeguard, the human rights of all Cypriots, without discrimination.

The framework for the construction of a better world is this very Organization of which we are all Members. Our guiding principles for the attainment of this goal are those enshrined in the United Nations Charter. We have the tools to proceed. What we absolutely need, however, is the political will to move forward.

Let us hope that this Millennium Assembly will strengthen our determination to work together in a spirit of solidarity in order to achieve the much desired goals of peaceful coexistence and prosperity in our common home, planet Earth.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Antonio Guterres, Prime Minister of the Portuguese Republic.

Mr. Guterres (Portugal) (*spoke in Portuguese; English text provided by the delegation*): Globalization is a reality; it is not an option. But there is a choice, a choice between allowing it to develop in an unregulated manner, leading to social exclusion and an

increase of injustices at the global level, or, on the other hand, placing it under control so that its potential will be at the service of all.

The turn of a millennium is usually a time of visions of great Utopias. The great Utopia of our time would be a world in peace, with full respect for the rights of human beings, with international relations based on justice and fairness, without hunger and without poverty, and with a sustainable symbiosis between humanity and nature. It would be a world politically structured, multipolar and balanced.

Unfortunately, this is not our universe, and even to draw a picture of this Utopia seems naive.

In the face of the impossibility of great Utopias, it is important, nevertheless, to mobilize the international community to build many small Utopias to enact possible reforms of the architecture of international relations towards greater justice among individuals, peoples and generations. To regulate the globalization of economies and markets, improve world governance and re-establish the primacy of political ethics over interests: these are the core objectives of the international community at the turn of the millennium.

An international agenda must be taken up — an agenda of concrete reforms. I shall talk about six.

The first is reform of the Bretton Woods system, turning it into the great regulator of the global economic and financial system, giving it more means to intervene and a more humanized perspective combining the guarantee of financial solidity and the principles of good governance with a new emphasis on the social needs of peoples, resolving once and for all the debt problem of the poorest countries.

The second reform is to create codes of conduct and effective forms of supervision of financial flows, helping them to become more stable and predictable.

Thirdly, we should bring into the World Trade Organization (WTO), with care, social and environmental questions.

The fourth reform is to mobilize the energies of societies and institutions to combat infectious diseases, such as AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria, and to prevent "info-exclusion", the so-called digital divide, that threatens the new knowledge-based economy.

The fifth reform is to convert to firm commitments, at the global level, the directions being progressively defined in world forums on the environment and sustainable development.

Sixthly, we should perfect international law and the means for its implementation in order to protect, ever more effectively, the sovereignty of the individual and to frame properly the right of humanitarian intervention. No aggressor should be able to count on the complacency of the international community, nor on the cynical invocation of the inviolability of its borders.

In the implementation of this agenda, due to their dimension and legitimacy, the United Nations and its agencies have a fundamental role to play.

The preparatory report to this Summit tells us that today humanity is united as much by the desire for peace as by the tragedy of war; as much by the spectacle of the most opulent wealth as by the most abject poverty; as much by the most creative freedom of expression as by the most brutal repression of belief; as much by the Internet as by HIV/AIDS.

The United Nations and its specialized agencies can and should function as the principal catalyst for international initiatives on the promotion of peace and human rights, but also of health, education, the protection of the environment, and equity in the international circulation and distribution of wealth and of access to information.

The reform and strengthening of the United Nations itself is, therefore, a key matter for our collective future. It should include, in my view, a profound effort to rationalize structures and means, reorganization and expansion of the Security Council itself and the creation of an Economic Security Council, as a catalyst for fairness, sustainable development and employment in the world economy. All must take their responsibility seriously in funding the United Nations. There must be an end to the hypocrisy of asking the United Nations to do what it does not have the means to achieve. It is important to demand efficiency of the Organization, but the resources necessary for it to act must also be made available.

The decisive importance of the United Nations has a living and eloquent symbol in East Timor. The victory of the Timorese cause constitutes a triumph of the rule of law over force and of international solidarity over *realpolitik* and indifference. At the same time,

East Timor is the place where, with success expected, one of the most ambitious and comprehensive operations in the history of the United Nations is being carried out. It is a good example of the importance of improving the mechanisms for the activities of the United Nations.

Here I would like to take the opportunity to express the support of my Government for the conclusions of the recently published Brahimi Panel report (A/55/305) on peace operations and to express the hope that there will be a constructive debate on the implementation of its recommendations.

As the Secretary-General states in his report, the values on which the twenty-first century should be based are freedom, solidarity, tolerance, non-violence, respect for the environment and natural resources and shared responsibility. Without those values, the international community, which we represent here today, cannot move forward to a future of dignity and prosperity for each and every one of its members.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by Her Excellency Sheikh Hasina, Prime Minister of the People's Republic of Bangladesh.

Sheikh Hasina (Bangladesh) (*spoke in Bengali; English text furnished by the delegation*)**:** The full text of my address has been circulated. Now I would like to read out only the highlights from it.

In a short span of human history, the world has changed beyond imagination. As we embark on our journey into the new millennium, hope and aspiration should steer us in overcoming the challenges. Our great leader, the Father of the Nation, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, led Bangladesh's 1971 war of liberation. He wanted to establish a happy and prosperous Golden Bengal, free from poverty, hunger, exploitation and deprivation. He made a historic speech at the United Nations in September 1974 in which he emphasized the need for peace, development, justice and equality — the same challenges that we face today.

Almost a year after he made that speech, he was assassinated, on 15 August 1975, along with most of the members of my family. My sister and I were the only survivors, as we were abroad. The killers and the conspirators had taken away fundamental human rights and destroyed democratic values. Their evil designs have, however, failed due to the commitment of our people to democracy. The killers have been tried under the laws of our land, found guilty and sentenced. Some, however, have managed to get refuge in foreign lands. We firmly believe that the convicted murderers should be returned to our land to face justice.

I would like to commend Secretary-General Kofi Annan for his millennium report, "We the peoples". His proposals in the four broad areas of poverty eradication, prevention of conflicts, environmental regeneration and renewal of the United Nations challenge world leaders to generate a new form of international cooperation.

At the dawn of the twenty-first century, we should work unitedly to establish a just, fair, equitable and democratic global system. We need democracy for development and its equitable sharing. We should work together so that we can benefit from the process of globalization.

Peace is a prerequisite for development. Bangladesh considers peace a fundamental human right to be attained, sustained, promoted and carried forward all the time. A threat to peace anywhere in the world is a threat to peace everywhere. Thus, we call for the enthusiastic promotion of a culture of peace worldwide.

Ending discrimination and protecting the weak and the vulnerable are key to achieving justice and equality. We have put special emphasis on women, children and the weaker sectors of society.

We have taken innovative approaches towards poverty eradication, putting the people at centre stage. The success of microcredit programmes has been phenomenal in Bangladesh, along with advances in the specific areas of primary education, health care, population programmes and women's empowerment.

We are happy that the United Nations is looking afresh at the peace operations it undertakes. As a major troop- contributing country over the years and as an elected member of the Security Council, Bangladesh intends to take a proactive role in making peace operations more effective.

The security and welfare of people are the core concern of the United Nations. We must undertake sustained and concerted efforts to free our people from poverty, hunger, illiteracy and disease. While microcredit and other poverty alleviation programmes

have been successful, much needs to be done to eradicate poverty.

There has been an outbreak of a malarial-type of disease called dengu in Bangladesh and other parts of our region. Many have been exposed to arsenic poisoning. Deadly diseases such as AIDS are spreading at an alarming pace. These maladies, which have regional and global dimensions, have to be confronted globally.

Let us all contribute to a strong and effective United Nations that can respond to the concerns of all. We hope that the Millennium Summit will generate new momentum for the United Nations, so that this Organization will be able to provide enhanced support for our efforts to eradicate poverty, empower people, attain population control, establish participatory democracy, preserve the environment, realize a nuclear-weapon-free world and promote a culture of peace.

May Bangladesh live forever. May the United Nations live forever.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Pervez Musharraf, Chief Executive of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

Mr. Musharraf (Pakistan): We are passing through momentous times in the history of mankind. Just as every dawn inspires fresh hope and a new moon is an occasion for prayer and a new year for resolutions, so also the turn of the new millennium kindles hope for the future among humanity. For the first time in history, vistas are in sight for sufficiency and freedom from want.

In the last century, the blossoming of human ingenuity brought about a massive global transformation. However, the most remarkable achievement was the formation of the United Nations to uphold the ideals of justice, peace and prosperity.

This body has resolved many major disputes and conflicts. In recent years, United Nations intervention halted massive human tragedies in Bosnia and Kosovo. Wherever there has been a departure from the United Nations Charter and defiance of United Nations decisions, disputes have only festered, often leading to conflict. Of these, Kashmir and Palestine are the two prime examples, but with a difference. Whereas the international community and this world body are seriously engaged in finding a solution to the Palestine issue, Kashmir cries for justice even after 52 years.

Pakistan is located in the world's most volatile region, where one fifth of humanity lives in a state of economic deprivation. While the global trend is towards economic progress through regional cooperation, South Asia is embroiled in conflict. Why this tragedy? Only because the people of Kashmir remain deprived of justice. The consequence of this injustice has been four wars. The region stands heavily militarized, even nuclearized. This situation is certainly not of Pakistan's making. We have been obliged to respond to the compulsions of our security and have merely acted in self-defence.

Kashmir, the root cause of tension, has to be resolved. Ten million people of the State cannot be denied their fundamental right to self-determination. The savage brutalities and killing of 70,000 people by 700,000 troops have only hardened their resolve. They seek the honouring of the pledges made to them by the United Nations. If the people of East Timor could be given their freedom, why not the people of Kashmir? When one party to a dispute is intransigent in rejecting the use of peaceful means, the Security Council is empowered to act. The problem lies not in the Charter, but in the lack of political will. Until we produce that will, all talk of crisis prevention and dispute resolution will ring hollow.

Pakistan stands for peace and is prepared to take bold initiatives to change the status quo through a dialogue with India at any level, at any time and anywhere. Let me confirm at this world forum that we desire a no-war pact; we are ready for a mutual reduction of forces; and we also seek a South Asia free from all nuclear weapons. Pakistan shall not be drawn into an arms race, nuclear or conventional, irrespective of provocation.

Pakistan remains conscious of international concern for democracy. Our founding father, the *Quaid-e-Azam*, envisioned Pakistan as a modern Islamic State committed to democracy based on equality, freedom and social justice. The people of Pakistan have never lost faith in democracy, but autocracy in the garb of democracy led to dishonest governance and the collapse of institutions. We stand sincerely committed to rebuilding and strengthening the institutions of state to give the country genuine and durable democracy.

A particularly dark aspect of the misrule damaging democracy in Pakistan has been corruption. Paradoxically, we have heard long lectures on democracy from countries which have laws that actually encourage corruption by giving ready asylum to plunderers and facilities for the concealment of illicit wealth in secret accounts in their banks. Such transfers will not make them much richer, but the poor will certainly become much poorer. Corruption is a transnational crime that calls for concerted international action. The United Nations should call for the banning of the transfers of ill-gotten wealth and demand cooperation in tracing and repatriating such funds.

The best assurance for the consolidation of global peace lies in the economic development and prosperity of all regions and all peoples. Economic progress in one region supports and complements prosperity in the other. The process of globalization and trade liberalization had raised hopes, but has caused disappointment. Global trade regimes make the rich North richer and the poor South poorer. This imbalance will further crush the developing countries under the increased burden of debt. The North, may I caution, cannot remain unaffected and will eventually get s cked into this vortex. The developing world needs the understanding and cooperation of creditor States and international financial institutions to dig themselves out from under this huge mountain of debt.

Pakistan will continue to work with other nations for a more effective and just United Nations, capable of rising above narrow interests to serve the greater cause of humanity. May the new millennium bring justice, peace and prosperity to all nations of the world.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Wim Kok, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

Mr. Kok (Netherlands): First of all, I join the Secretary-General and others in expressing our profound condolences to the families and colleagues of the eight workers killed today in West Timor. It is exactly one year ago today that the Security Council desperately tried to prevail upon the Indonesian Government to act against the militias that were wreaking havoc in East Timor. It is tragic to note that, one year later, the same militias are still committing atrocities, this time in West Timor.

I want to add my voice to the voices of those who have already paid tribute to the Secretary-General's visionary and action-oriented report on the role of the United Nations in the twenty-first century. We, the Member States, are crucial to any success or failure of the United Nations. Together we must determine what we want from the Organization, and each of us should be willing to invest politically and financially to enable the Organization to do what we want it to do. Not only do we need agreement on the core functions of the United Nations, but such agreement also requires a realistic assessment of its ability to perform them.

Reforms are well under way, but we can and must do more. At this Summit we must renew our efforts to bring prosperity, social justice and full recognition of human rights to all citizens of the world. Progress is needed on the issue of Security Council enlargement and reform. Progress is also needed to put the United Nations on a sound financial footing again.

Global governance needs to be strengthened to keep pace with the major challenges presented by globalization. The United Nations and other multilateral organizations and their member States have a pivotal task to perform if we are ever to tackle global concerns such as the spread of infectious diseases, including HIV/AIDS.

Closing the gap between rich and poor is a task that cannot be left to the market or to individual countries. Globalization should go hand in hand with solidarity and security for all. The Secretary-General is right when he urges us to focus on measures to achieve freedom from want and freedom from fear. The persistence of extreme poverty is an affront to humanity.

The second World Water Forum, held in The Hague in March this year, agreed on realistic targets for achieving major improvements in the availability of safe drinking water and basic sanitation by 2015. The Netherlands will continue its efforts to help achieve these targets, as well as the development targets agreed at the major United Nations conferences, by supporting United Nations organizations that function well; by urging multilateral organizations to introduce performance measurements; by promoting the formation of network alliances to ensure thematic and sectoral coordination at the global level; and, last but not least, by continuing to make its financial contributions.

Equally important is freedom from fear. The United Nations should be in a position to respond to a crisis in its early stages. Improving the Organization's peacekeeping capabilities is essential. The international rule of law needs to be strengthened. The International Court of Justice, the Yugoslavia Tribunal and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons — all located in The Hague — contribute to that goal. In the near future they will be joined by the International Criminal Court. The Netherlands has also offered to be host country for the Organization for the Prohibition of Biological Weapons.

Our endeavours to achieve freedom from want and freedom from fear for all should be guided and further inspired by the ideas in the Secretary-General's report, which draw on the United Nations Charter.

Finally, I would like to re-emphasize that ensuring a strong United Nations requires the combined efforts of all its Member States. The United Nations is not somebody else; the United Nations is us. The General Assembly can count on sound contributions and sustained efforts by the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by Her Excellency The Right Honourable Helen Clark, Prime Minister of New Zealand.

Ms. Clark (New Zealand): New Zealand is proud to reaffirm at this Summit its long-standing commitment to the principles and work of the United Nations. We have been a committed Member since the very beginning of the Organization. Our Prime Minister at that time, The Right Honourable Peter Fraser, played a significant role in framing the United Nations Charter. The Charter has stood the test of time as a framework for the conduct of relations between States and for the promotion of universal human rights and fundamental freedoms.

New Zealand places great importance on the rule of law and on the peaceful settlement of disputes. We have participated actively in the development of international law. This year we have responded to the Secretary-General's request to Member States to sign or ratify as many of the 25 core treaties as possible. We have also undertaken a full review of the extent of our participation in the international legal framework, with a view to becoming party to more treaties.

As a first step in that process, at this Summit we are carrying out seven fresh treaty actions, including signature or ratification of, or accession to, 5 of the 25 core treaties. This week, New Zealand is ratifying the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court; acceding to the Convention to Combat Desertification; signing and ratifying the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women; signing the two Optional Protocols to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, protocols on the involvement of children in armed conflict and on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography; and signing the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism.

We are also announcing our intention to become party to the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change by the time of Rio + 10, in mid-2002, and to the International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings. By these actions we hope to demonstrate how seriously our small country takes the treaty-making process and international law.

New Zealand's key preoccupations in the work of the United Nations in the coming years will be on issues of disarmament and security, human rights, the environment and development. Our passion for nuclear disarmament is well known. In the 1980s we declared ourselves nuclear-free because of our belief in the immorality of nuclear weapons and because we knew that nuclear war would be a catastrophe for our planet. We have also dedicated ourselves to the hard, slow, painstaking work of advancing disarmament at the multilateral level. Years of working with others for a comprehensive test-ban treaty paid off. Now our goal, working with our partners in the "new agenda" grouping, is nothing less than the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

The peacekeeping work of the United Nations is also a priority for New Zealand. My Government deplores the murders yesterday of United Nations relief workers in a West Timor refugee camp. I am gratified that New Zealand peacekeepers were able to evacuate many others to safety. I join other leaders in calling on Indonesia to act now to end this violence, and I endorse the Security Council's call for those responsible to be brought to justice. New Zealand also welcomes the report (A/55/305) of the Panel on United Nations Peace

Operations, and looks forward to a strengthened United Nations peacekeeping capacity.

On human rights, New Zealand will seek in particular to protect and promote further the rights of women and of indigenous people. I also believe that the United Nations itself can play an even greater role in the promotion of women to leadership roles within its own Organization.

On the environment, meeting our commitments under the Kyoto Protocol on Climate Change is a major challenge for New Zealand, but it is one we are determined to meet. The consequences of unchecked climate change are particularly severe for our South Pacific neighbours.

On development, the priority surely for the twenty-first century must be the needs of Africa. In Africa, conflicts have disrupted too many nations. Crisis and poverty together have held back economic development. On top of that, the HIV/AIDS pandemic has taken a heavy toll on human life.

The problems confronting Africa are a litmus test for the effectiveness and political will of the United Nations, its member countries and of African governments, as the "We the peoples" report implies. A better combination of programmes for debt relief, access to world markets for Africa's products, practical assistance for economic development and HIV/AIDS prevention, and good governance can make the difference for Africa.

Thank you for the opportunity to set out my country's priorities for working through the United Nations to meet the challenges of the twenty-first century.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. José María Aznar, President of the Government of the Kingdom of Spain.

Mr. Aznar (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): How will history rate the performance of the United Nations? It seems most fitting at this time to pose this and many other questions: Has the United Nations effectively preserved humankind from the scourge of war? Has the United Nations clearly and positively influenced economic development around the world? Is the Organization able to manage appropriately the challenges of globalization?

In the light of these questions, let me remind some of the reckless critics of the Organization that we are the United Nations, and we, the Member States and their Governments, are the ones who influence its performance. So it behoves us to decide what we want the Organization to be in the coming century: whether we want a useful tool for meeting our objectives, or we want a very hollow forum.

The choice is ours to make. Now, as back in June 1945, we need a sincere consensus on the fundamental role of the United Nations in our time.

The original goal of the United Nations was to preserve the world from the scourge of war and remains so to this day. The Security Council is the cornerstone of a system, which strives to maintain international peace and security. It is therefore a priority to achieve Council reform through a broad-based consensus, avoiding dissension among Member States that would adversely erode its legitimacy.

Other aspects of the reform of the Security Council, its working methods and the power of veto, should be dealt with in a most rigorous manner because although the central role of the Council within the United Nations system is beyond question, humankind's ethical conscience has greatly evolved over time so that the international community will not sit idle in the presence of mass-scale atrocities and human rights violations wherever they may occur.

The principle of state sovereignty is the mainstay of the international community and no one intends to question this fact. By the same token, that very principle may not be used as a shield behind which those encouraging and abetting massive atrocities find cover. In our days, armed conflicts take their heaviest toll among civilian populations, namely women and children. We must therefore seek and define an understanding of those situations in which international reaction may not be thwarted by the exercise of the power of veto.

Any progress achieved by mankind during this violent twentieth century is owing to the fact that — even at a staggering high cost — the notion has prevailed that human dignity is deemed more valuable than the sanctity of the state.

Other than maintaining international peace and security, the United Nations has set out to achieve the goal of economic development for all. If we are to

build a more just and equitable world we must overcome poverty. The recent upsurge of economic growth and technological progress give us the best chance ever to achieve our goal. It would be unforgivable if we do not gather the means to do it.

We heartily support the objectives set out to this end in the Secretary-General's report for the Millennium Summit.

Let me in particular underline our commitment to achieving the goal set forth in the World Summit for Social Development of directing 20 per cent of our development aid to basic sectors such as education, health care, housing and employment policies.

These are the tools that help primarily those in need and lift them up from poverty. Specifically, equal opportunity in education worldwide may open new doors for new and more confident generations. We are fully aware of the valuable role played by different social and civic endeavours, in particular non-governmental organizations, in implementing cooperation projects.

The last challenge before the United Nations, and the most current one, is related to the amazing process of global integration driven by the new technologies. Endless possibilities are at hand for building a more independent and evolved world. The United Nations should enhance the many positive sides of globalization to prevent the weakest among us from being left behind.

Globalization certainly creates new challenges, among which the need to protect and preserve the environment for future generations, the fight against organized international crime, the establishment of an international criminal justice system, and also finding a cure for globally spread diseases.

Spain will vigorously support all efforts to find consensus solutions to all these problems and to uphold the relevant agreements. Specifically, ratification by my country of the Rome Treaty establishing an International Criminal Court is very near, and we trust that it will be implemented promptly.

The manifold addresses during this Summit are laying down the challenges facing our Organization in the coming years. The Secretary-General's report no doubt stands as a suitable and revealing proposal for analysis of the future. Thus, let us all be convinced and therefore provide the means to make the United Nations in the new century the indispensable and useful tool to secure a better world for us all.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Guy Verhofstadt, Prime Minister of Belgium.

Mr. Verhofstadt (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): Allow me first to thank the Secretary-General for the report he presented for this historic meeting. It is an excellent report, and the report that we needed. Not only does it describe the major challenges, but above all it also sets out clear and precise objectives. Belgium fully supports it. My country commits itself here and in other international institutions of which it is a member to support all actions that can help attain those objectives.

I would like to discuss two of the major challenges that figure in the report of the Secretary-General: the peacekeeping role of the United Nations, and the worldwide scourge of HIV/AIDS.

Turning first to the Organization's peacekeeping missions, such missions have been on the increase for more than 40 years now. This, indeed, has become the Organization's natural vocation. The net result of these operations has, unfortunately, not been positive — and I am speaking with circumspection. In many cases, these operations have been true debacles. The darkest pages were written in Rwanda, where genocide was committed before the indifferent eyes of us all, including my country. Hundreds of thousands of men, women and children were slaughtered. Ten Belgian "blue helmets" lost their lives in that operation. Belgium has sought to learn the lessons of that tragedy. I note with satisfaction that many of those lessons have a place in the report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations chaired by Mr. Brahimi. Moreover, those lessons are in line with the observations and conclusions of the Organization of African Unity on this matter.

I wish in particular to highlight the need to guarantee that the quality and quantity of the troops and equipment provided will be sufficient, on the basis of the most pessimistic scenario; to formulate clear, credible and flexible mandates that can quickly be adapted to the situation on the ground; to involve troop-contributing countries in the formulation of mandates; to provide the proper preparation, information and training to troops in peace operations; to improve resources for organization, information and

planning; and to make the chain of command and the relationship between the theatre of operations and the Secretariat less bureaucratic.

But however much to the point these recommendations may be, even the full implementation of the Brahimi report would not be enough to prevent tragedies like those that took place in Rwanda, Srebrenica and Somalia. We would still be faced with applying the recommendations, as well as with the difficulty of recruiting troops and with their late deployment on the ground. We must therefore go further in our thinking. I believe that we need a new concept of peacekeeping. That means forming standing, ready-to-deploy regional peace-operation capabilities. These, which should be of brigade size, would be set up by the States of a region and would be materially and financially supported by the United Nations. As members know, the European Union is creating a rapid reaction force that will be operational in 2003. In a way, the new concept would be an attempt to make that initiative a general one by establishing a rapid reaction force in each region of the world. This certainly would not imply the disengagement of the Western countries; to the contrary, in addition to forming their own rapid reaction forces, those countries would help financing the equipping and training of such regional capabilities — obviously, under the control and responsibility of the United Nations.

The tragedy of AIDS has grown alarmingly: 36 million human beings have been afflicted, some two thirds of them in sub-Saharan Africa. As in all of history's major epidemics, the uncontrolled spread of AIDS is exacerbated by poverty, ignorance, dogmatism, social exclusion and non-recognition of the rights of women — and, it must be said, by the refusal of some leaders to face the facts. The goals and time-frames set out in the report of the Secretary-General must be met at any cost. Let us be clear: the only possibility for meeting those goals and time-frames is for the rich countries substantially to increase the resources allocated for prevention, for the distribution of medicines and for the development of a vaccine.

With respect to access to basic treatment, Belgium has decided, in close cooperation with the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), to provide four African countries with an assortment of medicines worth 250 million Belgian francs. Direct distribution to patients, which will begin this year, will take place through existing primary health-care structures. Clearly, these basic medicines must reach the poorest of the ill. In the same spirit, Belgium has decided to increase its budget for AIDS research by 150 million Belgian francs.

I conclude by firmly endorsing the Secretary-General's appeal to Member States to reform the Security Council without delay. This has been under discussion for seven years now, and I think it is time to conclude. To that end, it is urgent to give up positions that are too conservative or that are utterly unrealistic: those, for example, that defend the status quo on the one hand, and, on the other, those that would open the Council to new categories of membership to the point where it would nearly resemble the General Assembly. As members know, Belgium is coordinator of a group of Member States that has made realistic, practical proposals that would expand the Council by five permanent members and five non-permanent members, with equitable geographical distribution. Belgium would clearly be open to proposals along those lines.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Marco Antonio de Oliveira Maciel, Vice-President of the Federative Republic of Brazil.

Mr. Maciel (Brazil) (*spoke in Portuguese; interpretation furnished by the delegation*): Let me begin by expressing our strongest condemnation of the attack by Timorese militias on the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) office at Atambua, West Timor. Our deepest sympathy and condolences go to the bereaved families, and we express our sincere wish that those injured may recover speedily.

It gives me great satisfaction to convey to this historic Summit the greetings of the President of Brazil, Fernando Henrique Cardoso, and of the entire Brazilian nation. I am confident that the President of Finland, Tarja Halonen, and President Sam Nujoma of Namibia, the Co-Chairpersons of the Millennium Summit, will provide inspired and firm guidance as we conduct our deliberations. I also salute Secretary-General Kofi Annan, whose experience and breadth of vision of world affairs have been crucial to the strengthening of the United Nations.

The Millennium Summit offers a propitious opportunity to reaffirm our collective commitment to international peace and security, the observance of human rights, respect for international law, protection

of the environment, the eradication of poverty and the well-being of all. These are goals that can only be achieved in the wake of economic and social development.

The United Nations has a key role to play in achieving these objectives. There is no alternative to the path laid out by the Organization if we are to foster the ideals of liberty, equality, solidarity and tolerance among peoples. The United Nations has increasingly become an indispensable tool in our collective endeavours to overcome the challenges of the modern world.

The establishment of the United Nations is one of the great legacies of the twentieth century. The time has come to revitalize it, to ensure that it mirrors the contemporary state of global affairs and the trend towards greater democracy in international relations. We must reform the Security Council to make it more representative, effective and legitimate. No longer can we tolerate anachronistic decision-making structures that are not only selective, but fail to reflect the dynamics of worldwide transformations of the last few decades.

It is imperative to prevent the creation of an environment conducive to unilateral actions falling outside the framework of the United Nations Charter and international law. It is also imperative to renew within the United Nations the debate on the critical issue of economic, social and cultural development.

Brazil shares the view of Secretary-General Kofi Annan that extreme poverty is an affront to humanity. Poverty eradication, access to education, the supply of basic health services and sustainable development require a concerted effort on the part of the entire international community. Globalization should be a means for creating a world of greater solidarity and, therefore, a world that is less asymmetrical. We appeal to the developed countries to move ahead with debt-reduction initiatives benefiting the poorest countries. Such measures will undoubtedly help to bring on stream educational programmes geared to the requirements of the needy, in particular by widening the access of poor children to basic schooling.

By the same token, the United Nations cannot remain aloof in view of the need to ensure access to science and technology and to ensure that this access is more democratic, so as to enable all the peoples of the world to share in the information age. The United Nations must assist in efforts to remove restrictions on developing countries playing a more active role in the world economy.

As we the leaders from all parts of the world gather to reaffirm our collective commitments, let us bear in mind the significant efforts being made to enhance coordination at the regional level. In this respect, allow me to refer to the holding last week — for the first time in our history — of a meeting of the Presidents of all the countries in South America. The success of this "Meeting of the Presidents of South America", held in Brasilia, reinforces the prospects for the consolidation of a regional zone of prosperity, where our countries will be able to address common challenges and opportunities. I am convinced that the outcome of the gathering in Brasilia constitutes a meaningful contribution, from our perspective, to the dynamics of regional integration, which is crucial in these times of globalization.

Mr. Gurirab (Namibia) took the chair.

The Brasilia Meeting highlighted priorities of the region. Our commitment to democracy was enhanced. We underscored our conviction that the improvement of infrastructure geared to regional integration, the strengthening of our trade ties, closer technical and scientific cooperation, and the fight against drug trafficking and related crimes are decisive measures which will foster comprehensive regional development. Finally, as a reaffirmation of the peaceful aspirations of the countries of the region, we agreed to establish a South American zone of peace.

We are convinced that the Millennium Summit will be a watershed in our endeavours to build a better world. If we are to achieve this goal as we enter the twenty-first century, it is essential that we bring new vigour and strength to the United Nations.

The Acting Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by Her Excellency The Honourable Billie Miller, Member of Parliament, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade of Barbados.

Mrs. Miller (Barbados): In the 34 years since our independence we have striven for nothing less than to define our identity out of the crucible of a history that encompasses the darkest episode in human relations. We in Barbados and the Caribbean are, in truth, the people of this millennium. We did not exist in the first

millennium. Those who inhabited our islands then were extinguished by the desolation of early colonialism. Their lives remain a mystery to us, decipherable only through a few pieces of stone and remnants of folklore. The present people of the Caribbean are the new people of the New World.

We identify ourselves at the cusp of two millenniums as a sovereign nation whose level of prosperity, education and well-being have been attained at high cost. We have not come to this point in our development easily or by chance, supported in every aspect by preferences and special dispensations, as some would have you believe. We come to this place and time through endeavour and sacrifice.

Our expectation when we became a Member of this Organization was that we would become part of an assemblage that would protect our territorial integrity, support our sovereignty and assist us in our quest to realize the full potential of our citizens. Membership in the United Nations, the original and largest of experiments in multilateralism, was both practical and symbolic for us.

Barbados has a perspective on multilateralism that is inherently positive. We understand it as interdependence in the management and sustainable development of our planet and our peoples. We know it as offering the opportunity for collaborative decision-making based on shared information, and we believe in its precepts of mutual respect and mutual benefit.

It would seem, however, that these tenets are no longer held to be sacred by all of us. Debate continues on the worthiness of multilateralism as a natural evolutionary development in the relationship between countries. The United Nations is at the heart of this argument. There is no denying that faith in the United Nations to deliver on its myriad mandates is too often in doubt. Lack of trust in the system has led to apathy among the majority. This has given rise to a disquieting tendency to flout the moral authority of the United Nations, endanger its agents for peace and development, and undermine its credibility and effectiveness as global arbiter and guardian of human progress.

The experience of Barbados with multilateralism has been diverse and pervasive. We are inheritors of membership in the Commonwealth of Nations. Our relations with Africa and the Pacific have been conducted largely within the unique forum of the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries. In our own hemisphere we have become an integral part of the Summit of the Americas process. And, of course, the fraternity and interdependence between our countries in the Caribbean Community needs no amplification.

In the midst of all our positive perceptions, however, there is growing anxiety and unease. We have noticed a tendency by the large and mighty members of the world community to exploit the very laudable precepts of the United Nations to maintain an unjust status quo or to impose unpalatable conditionalities on peaceful coexistence.

The list of issues that are undermining Barbados' position in that hard-won niche we have carved for ourselves continues to grow. The efforts of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development to direct our tax regimes and that organization's blacklisting of the offshore financial centres of small economies is a case in point. So too is the severe pressure within the Free Trade Area of the Americas for liberalization of financial markets, as is the refusal of those culpable to accept responsibility for massive environmental degradation and to put real resources in place to redress that damage.

True equity and true reciprocity need an equitable balancing of every aspect of multilateral transaction.

Barbados came to the United Nations with clean hands and a clear conscience. We had no differences with our neighbours that were reconcilable only by war. We had no designs on our neighbours' territory and no ambitions to dictate to others the way in which they should, within the parameters of the United Nations Charter, manage their affairs and determine their destinies. We remain a small, peace-loving nation, guided on our course by the lodestar of democratic principles, parliamentary governance and respect for the human rights of our citizens. Our ambition remains to safeguard and build on what we have so far earned and to have, in the global scheme of things, more than just a vote.

We wish for the United Nations to assume responsibility for integrating into the world multilateral system the small States of this planet, which expect and, indeed, have a right to be an active and effective part of the processes of global governance. To fail to act now would deny us a future of prosperity and fulfilled human potential. We are not expected to

complete this task, but neither are we at liberty to abstain from it.

The Acting Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Tuiloma Neroni Slade, Chairman of the delegation of Samoa.

Mr. Slade (Samoa): By brave experiment five decades and more ago, we sought a better world: a hoped-for new order premised on peace, justice and well-being for all.

That today we are able to meet as a vastly transformed, near-universal United Nations bears testimony to vision and endeavour. This Summit is an occasion for rededication to the spirit of that endeavour.

But developments of the past half century have not yielded full dividends for all nations, nor for all peoples. The promises of the Charter remain unfulfilled. All over the world, core values and the human condition are under assault, constantly, shamefully. Far too many are in torment because of hunger and disease. We remain a world that needs to be far better. This Summit must therefore be a recommitment to human values.

It is also an occasion to renew commitment to the purposes of the Organization. Samoa does so as a small country and with abiding faith in the principles of the Charter. The principles are sound. They are as true today as at the inception, and they provide for an expanding future. What needs to be established is the political determination for applying the principles.

The Organization remains uniquely suited to the pursuit of human values and objectives and the coordination of global activities. But, of course, it needs to change and to adapt.

The Security Council, in particular, must be able to respond to the requirements of a fundamentally different international setting. It needs to be reformed comprehensively to meet contemporary demands and the conditions of the world today.

The membership of the Security Council must be enlarged to reflect the realities of the present time and to enhance its representative role and effectiveness.

We believe very deeply in the sustaining power of international law in support of the principles of the Charter. The United Nations is an essential and cohesive force in the elaboration of international law and rules for international cooperation which now regulate a phenomenal range of human activity.

Samoa gives its fullest endorsement to the most timely initiative of the Secretary-General and his call for universal participation in the multilateral treaty framework, especially in connection with those treaties that are representative of the key objectives of the Organization.

The desire of my country for effective disarmament and the total elimination of weapons of mass destruction is well known. Such weapons represent the great paradox of our time: while nations desire peace, and talk of peace, far more of the national wealth goes towards the development and acquisition of ever more sophisticated and ever more destructive weapons of mass destruction.

Nuclear weapons, in particular, reach beyond the paradox to impose a global curse. Their continuing existence poses the gravest of threats to international security and to global human survival. Samoa gives the fullest support to the Secretary-General's proposal for convening a major international conference to identify ways of eliminating nuclear dangers.

Samoa believes most strongly in the need for and the purposes of the International Criminal Court, and will continue to play its part in the development of the Court. Humanity needs more than ever a fair, effective and independent instrument of international criminal justice.

For the safeguarding of human rights, all nations, working together, need to persist with efforts to promote tolerance and understanding. The fact is that we are all of one human family. Our diversity of race and culture should pose no threat. Rather, it should be seen as the fountainhead, offering vast potential for mutual enrichment and fundamental freedoms. Freedom is the natural beat of every human heart; democracy the measure of its expression. We need to ensure unquestioned acceptance of the dignity and equality of all and full respect for their human rights.

Poverty must be made a high-priority millennium challenge. Too many are at risk. Some are as poor today as they were 20 years ago. This is an appalling fact, especially at a time when economies and income levels are at their highest peaks in many other countries.

Poverty is first and foremost a problem of development. In addressing it we need to address the interlinking crises of public health, agricultural productivity, environmental degradation and demographic stresses. It is impossible to develop a nation without a healthy and trained population. Disease and malnutrition will compound despair.

The global environment is under severe stress. Human activity is very largely the cause. Serious natural disasters have become more the norm than the exception. The consequences for a small vulnerable country like my own have a direct impact on life-support systems and the well-being of communities and the national economy. The effects are destructive, and they are lasting.

For Samoa and other small island States, no phenomenon is more threatening in its consequences and risks than climate change.

Small island States are doing what they can to contribute to the international climate change negotiations and to efforts to combat this problem and to design response mechanisms. We played our part in negotiating the Kyoto Protocol, which is an important first step, and we are committed to bringing it into effect as quickly as is possible.

The sustainable development of small island developing States was the focus of the twenty-second special session of the General Assembly, last year. It is a matter of obvious priority for Samoa and the Alliance of Small Island States.

The twenty-second special session produced specific and very practical measures for addressing the special needs and vulnerabilities of small island States aimed at enhancing capacities for national self-assurance and economic self-sufficiency. This objective, we believe, has an important and enduring message for other developing countries. We urge the international community to give these matters full and timely attention.

With its legacy and lessons of the old century, and the infinite promise of the new millennium, Samoa believes very deeply that the future is very much on the side of the United Nations.

The meeting rose at 7.25 p.m.

United Nations A/55/PV.5

General Assembly

Official Records

Fifty-fifth session

5th plenary meeting
Thursday, 7 September 2000, 9 a.m.
New York

Co-Chairperson: Ms. Tarja Halonen ..... (President of the Republic of Finland)
Co-Chairperson: Mr. Sam Nujoma ..... (President of the Republic of Namibia)

The meeting was called to order at 9 a.m.

Addresses on the occasion of the Summit *(continued)*

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will first hear an address by His Highness Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani, Amir of the State of Qatar.

Sheikh Al-Thani (*spoke in Arabic*): It is a source of pleasure and pride for us to address, on behalf of the State of Qatar and its people, and before this honourable gathering, the Millennium Summit held by the General Assembly at United Nations Headquarters. We congratulate and salute Secretary-General Kofi Annan and his staff for their fruitful efforts in organizing this meeting.

It is no coincidence that most statements delivered from this podium since the Summit began have focused on the subject of globalization. This phenomenon, which is the product of economic, social, cultural and technological developments and breakthroughs in the field of information, has become not only a major factor in the process of political decision-making, but a standard for determining the elements of international relations.

We find ourselves talking about a world of diminished distances and dimensions, of easy means of communications among peoples and nations, by virtue of the emerging means that the informatics revolution has provided; a world in which we witness with great admiration the giant strides taken and the impressive results achieved through scientific research, particularly during the last decade of the previous century.

It is regrettable, however, that in this same world, technological and even linguistic illiteracy are widespread among the majority of its peoples. Approximately 1 billion of its inhabitants suffer in abject and disgraceful poverty. As a result of the economic invasion, the economies of many countries are threatened with permanent crises and stifling debts. Moreover, its natural environment is deteriorating due to abusive exploitation, which runs counter to the recommendations of numerous international forums, particularly the Conference held at Rio de Janeiro.

Is this not the way things really are? Is this state of affairs not far removed from the ideal of building on Earth and honouring human beings advocated by all religions and enshrined by international norms and covenants? As we take part in this international forum, which embodies the universality of man, are we not supposed to stand together, to think and consider the ideal formula for restoring normalcy and making up for what is lost before it is too late? We, as individuals and groups, have a great responsibility to bear with integrity in the service of present and future generations.

To achieve a better future for humanity and to realize the principles of the United Nations is

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impossible without collective political will, wherein all parties in the international community cooperate with each other in one concerted effort with the aim of adopting a strategy aimed essentially at narrowing the economic and scientific gap among States and at ensuring to the optimum the fair utilization of the fruits of technological progress. We believe that the United Nations is qualified to formulate an international system that includes globalization and spreads its blessings on all humanity, while curbing its negative effects.

Here, we should like to lay out our viewpoint concerning the procedural steps that may ensure the success of such a strategy. First, we firmly believe that the objective condition for bringing nations closer together lies in establishing a comprehensive educational plan based on eliminating linguistic illiteracy, promulgating compulsory education and providing opportunities for harnessing information technology in the service of the goals of development. The human being of the third millennium cannot be satisfied merely by knowing how to write, but should be able to master the use of the modern means of communication and to freely express his ideas and to discuss those of other people.

Secondly, in order to improve the economic situation of developing countries, particularly the poorest among them, serious consideration should be given to cancelling the debts of poor States. We believe that it may be useful for these debts to be converted into capital invested in development projects that would revive the production process and generate employment opportunities, which would, in turn, reduce, if not eliminate, the flow of emigration to developed countries. It would be appropriate, in this respect, to provide special support to those States that have taken fundamental steps towards democracy.

Thirdly, it is somewhat regrettable that development assistance given by donor countries is not proportionate with their gross domestic product. This runs counter to good judgement and logic.

Fourthly and lastly, we believe that it is in the interest of developed countries to be mindful of the great damage that will befall them by reason of their economic policies vis-à-vis the developing countries. We shall briefly refer, in this respect, to three indicators.

The first indicator relates to the developing countries that produce and export raw materials. Industrialized developed countries are indifferent to the high prices of their own products, while they raise objecting voices when the prices of raw materials, such as petroleum, rise in international markets, although such an increase is the result of high taxes imposed by those developed countries. The second indicator relates to the industrial countries resorting to various excuses with the aim of weakening the competitive power of some developing countries. The third indicator relates to the increasing restrictions that those developed countries and their giant corporations impose on the exploitation of the great advances that have been made in the various spheres of human knowledge and technology development, under the pretext of protecting intellectual property.

We endorse the constructive proposals submitted by the Secretary-General in his report concerning the elimination of armed conflicts in the world and the role of the United Nations in this respect. We would emphasize the particular importance of three issues.

First, the United Nations should be urged to enhance its role in bringing the Arab-Israeli conflict to an end. We welcome any other efforts that could be made outside the United Nations in this regard, provided that they pay due respect to the rights of the Palestinian and Syrian peoples established by international resolutions. In the same context, we believe that the issue of Holy Jerusalem should be accorded the extreme priority that it deserves, by reason of its distinct place in the hearts and minds of Arabs and Muslims, and since it is the cornerstone of any prospective peace in the Middle East.

The second issue is the necessity of moving quickly towards making the Middle East a nuclear-weapon-free zone. From this forum, we call on Israel to accede to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

The third issue relates to the necessity of putting checks on the way international sanctions are imposed. These checks should establish a time-frame so that these sanctions will not continue forever.

As we look forward to contributing to the improvement of the performance of the United Nations, we feel that the only way to realize this goal is to extend democratic practices and equal opportunities within the various international organizations. It is also

high time to expand the membership of the Security Council so as to include, fairly and equitably, all regions of the world. The Arab world should have a permanent seat in the Council because of its importance.

At this time, on the threshold of the third millennium, we look forward to a peaceful and safe world, a world in which justice, security and prosperity reign free of division, war and misery while moving smoothly towards change, development and betterment that will contribute to the progress of all humanity.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Aleksander Kwasniewski, President of the Republic of Poland.

President Kwasniewski: In history, an end also marks a beginning. Now, at the turn of the centuries, we have a strong sense that this is happening. History has quickened its pace, and the new face of the world is emerging before our eyes.

Many may find the balance of the passing century depressing: two world wars and hundreds of local ones; two ominous totalitarian systems; achievements of science drawn in work of destruction; famine; surges of egoism among nations and groups which crushed individuals. Yet, the twentieth century has also had its brighter pages. Owing to the progress of technology, mankind has been equipped with new medicines, new sources of energy and new means of communication. International cooperation has flourished. The world has learned to appreciate both its own multi-dimensional character and the multiplicity of cultures. Freedom, democracy, rule of law, tolerance, as never before in history, have built a common house for millions of people.

I am proud to represent a country which has made a substantial contribution to this positive transformation. Twenty years ago, the phenomenon of Polish "Solidarity" gave rise to a surge which eventually melted the ice of the cold war. In 1989, in the wake of the Round Table Talks, at an historic meeting of Government and "Solidarity"-led opposition, the Poles showed how the will to negotiate and agreement above divisions could bring about an historic breakthrough. Democracy, reforms, reconciliation and development have become part and parcel of Poland's everyday life. Ultimately, the whole of our region of Central Europe emerged as a force of stability, security, development and progress.

Aware of its assets and proportionate to its potential, Poland participates — and intends to be even more actively involved — in the construction of the new global order. This has been evidenced, inter alia, by the participation of thousands of Polish soldiers and observers in United Nations peacekeeping missions, by the efforts during our chairmanship of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), as well as by the Warsaw Declaration, adopted last June, when, together with other democratic countries, we reiterated our determination to cooperate on the basis of fundamental values of democracy and human rights.

Let us ask ourselves, let us honestly consider: Have we really been able to develop and apply procedures and instruments to effectively protect human rights? Have we yet found a way to overcome divisions between the impoverished South and the prospering North? Are we able to protect the natural environment? Do we know how to ensure that the era of inexorable progress of information and communications really favours development of culture and education, and that it will not transform into an era of information chaos? In the face of the market *diktat*, do we not lose sight of the human person in his or her full dimension, including his or her spiritual values?

The term "globalization" has been coined for our new interdependence. I represent a country which has opened itself to the world, emerging as an even more active participant in trade, scientific and technological exchanges. We, in Poland, feel at ease in a world of cultural interaction and lively contacts between people.

We should remember, however, that there is also a dark side to globalization. The disparity between poor and rich countries continues to grow. I am convinced that we can succeed in this endeavour only if we accept that world development must be based on universal values. In this respect, the principle of solidarity will have an important role to play.

Solidarity is shared responsibility. It is sensitivity to the needs and fears of the weaker. It is willingness to cooperate and to offer support. It is priority of concerted efforts over unilateral action. It is respect for diversity and dialogue. But, above all, I perceive solidarity as freedom, dignity and welfare of the individual which are brought into the focus of attention of all political action and global campaigns. What the

world needs today is a synthesis of the strengths, which the free market has undoubtedly demonstrated, combined with realistic and people-oriented solutions which have to be introduced into political practice.

The threshold of the twenty-first century poses a formidable challenge to the United Nations. The world has changed; the concept of international order is transforming. Hence the imperative need to reform our Organization in order to enable it to face great global challenges and, at the same time, to protect the rights of every person. Within the United Nations, we need efficient organs, a flexible programme, and effective use of resources. Our role — as Heads of State or Government — should be to provide clear guidelines, political support and adequate resources for the Organization.

We need our world Organization more than ever before. We must face up to the inevitable: changing lifestyles, changing ways of communication and of satisfying needs. In this new, ever changing world, the United Nations should offer us a sense of stability and predictability. I am deeply convinced that the United Nations is able to serve mankind in such a way, facing the challenges to come in this new twenty-first century.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Maldas Adamkus, President of the Republic of Lithuania.

President Adamkus: A number of speakers at this historic event have already made numerous concrete and valuable proposals on ways to adapt the United Nations to the challenges of the twenty-first century. I hope that the final document of the Summit will enhance this process by setting concrete objectives for the Organization.

We cannot expect that the process involving the renewal of the United Nations and the increasing role of the Organization will proceed on an easy and fast track. There might be a great deal of disappointment. The most important thing, however, is that the process be continuous.

The United Nations cannot solve all of the problems and meet all of the challenges. The success of our efforts to re-adapt ourselves to new realities will depend primarily on the involvement of States and the regions. The Member States should also play an active role in finding ways of addressing the needs of today.

The United Nations will enhance its influence when some Member States assume a greater share of responsibility by making an increased contribution to the Organization. On behalf of Lithuania, I would like to announce that my country is increasing its contribution to United Nations peacekeeping operations.

The development of our region demonstrates that the progress made by countries depends directly on the extent of the efforts made to achieve it. Our own experience during the 10 years of our independence has shown that a liberal democracy, a market economy, an open society and respect for human rights are the basic preconditions necessary for achieving progress in a short period of time. Only a very few countries, for example those with extensive natural resources, might ignore these principles, but, as history shows, not for long.

I believe that in the face of a globalized tomorrow, the United Nations will increase the scope of its human-dimension activities. Human rights should become a cornerstone of the emerging world structure. The United Nations should advance in the search for new and more effective instruments to fend off the challengers of human rights.

Globalization will continue to bring into question the limits of human rights applicability. My region is particularly interested in how the international community can promote the rights of people coping with a post-communist transition.

Ten years of profound transformation have endowed Central and Eastern European nations with invaluable experience. Good-neighbourly relations have become an earmark of the region. For instance, despite the serious disagreements that have existed in the past, the strategic partnership that has evolved between Lithuania and its neighbour Poland is a remarkable example.

The cases of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe have shown that integration works to the benefit of all participating countries and of their neighbours. Lithuania is working, and will continue to work, in the same direction with respect to the part it is playing in Euro-Atlantic enlargement.

Yet Central and Eastern Europe have to resolve numerous issues, which I will call "divorce legacies". In the process of the disintegration of one dominant

power and one ideology, thousands, if not millions, of people are waiting to be compensated for lost lives, health or property. They are looking for justice, which is perceived as a compensation for their losses in the past. The United Nations could play a more important role in addressing the expectations of such people.

A number of speakers in this forum have underlined the importance of the principle of equality among nations. This is an essential principle of international relations. The leading nations in this multipolar environment, however, should also expand their role and take on more responsibilities. The right leadership can help to find a way out of a deadlocked situation. In this light, we note the progress made in the reform of the Security Council.

The United Nations has a commendable record of reconciling the differences that stem from our different backgrounds. The year 2001 has been proclaimed the United Nations Year of Dialogue among Civilizations. It is a great honour for Lithuania to host, next April, the International Conference on Dialogue among Civilizations, which Mr. Koichiro Matsuura, Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), has kindly agreed to co-chair.

Over the last decades, the concept of civilization has outgrown its traditional cultural limits and today also involves social and economic values. The global community is being realigned according to this new blueprint. But the challenge is greater than that. The cultural richness that history has bestowed upon us must go hand in hand with the progress that globalization promotes. We must build a dialogue in a language acceptable to many. That language, I believe, should be based on the principles enshrined in key United Nations instruments, primarily the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. This is the real challenge that we face now.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by Her Excellency Ms. Tarja Halonen, President of the Republic of Finland.

President Halonen: The United Nations needs to be more relevant to its Member States, but especially to their peoples. It is important that all individuals sense the relevance of the United Nations and support its mission.

The United Nations has done, and needs to continue to do, good work for those most in need — women, children, minorities and the disabled. The United Nations global conferences have addressed many human needs and individuals' everyday concerns, and we will continue in conferences on racism, AIDS, and the situation of children. I would emphasize that "We the peoples" is the central element of the United Nations Charter.

The United Nations must be essential also in the maintenance of international peace and security. Here I speak about a comprehensive concept of security. Peace is not only the absence of war. Democracy, respect for human rights, the rule of law and good governance are essential for comprehensive security and development. They are also effective means of crisis prevention.

Civilian crisis management should be developed and strengthened. A competent judiciary, a well-functioning educational system and effective local administration are everyday examples. Using the same elements, post-conflict peace-building consolidates a nation's foundation and prevents the renewal of conflicts. But we still need traditional peacekeeping, and therefore we should urgently consider the recommendations of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations.

As much as we must protect people from fear, we must protect them from want. We need to make them feel secure and respected. Human-centred sustainable development is the best means of long-term crisis prevention. It addresses the structural causes of conflict and thus builds a solid foundation for lasting peace. Elimination of poverty, respect for human rights and gender equality are crucial elements in this respect. I am convinced that there is no peace without sustainable development and no development without lasting peace. They go hand in hand in all parts of the world.

As a Co-Chairperson of this Summit, I have noticed that everybody is speaking about globalization — and rightly so, because it is one of our major challenges. The United Nations must make a serious effort to ensure that all countries and all people can enjoy the fruits of globalization.

Another challenge to the United Nations is how to use the revolution in information and communication technology to advance development. At the same time, the United Nations must continue its

work to improve basic education. We know that to be able to read and write is still just a dream for millions of our fellow-citizens. Concerning information and communication technology, the United Nations must establish partnerships, including partnerships with the private sector. To the developing countries, this revolution offers a chance to make leaps in development. Closing the digital divide would help narrow the gap between developed and developing countries and would help make them more equal partners in world affairs. Nevertheless, there is no magic formula for development. New and old remedies must complement one another. Increased assistance must focus on individuals and their needs. We must forgive the debts of the poorest countries and remove obstacles from their trade.

The participation of civil society is very important in terms of the relevance of the United Nations. Its input is needed in all United Nations activities. Non-governmental organizations have played a crucial role in setting the global agenda. This participation must be extended to civil society as a whole, including parliaments, the private sector and the business community. Their representatives could be included, for instance, in official United Nations delegations, as they are in Finland's. Wide international cooperation among all actors brings the United Nations closer to "we the peoples". I commend the Secretary-General for his initiatives on including civil society. Strengthening the United Nations requires new approaches to support. In his report entitled "We the peoples" (A/54/2000), the Secretary-General presents an excellent blueprint for the United Nations.

Faced with multifaceted tasks the United Nations needs a strong commitment to multilateralism from all its Members.

We know the facts. We know what we want. We know how to get it. All we need is the will to do it.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): Before I give the floor to the next speaker, I should like to draw the attention of members to a matter concerning the maintenance of order in the General Assembly Hall. There have been many instances of cellular telephones ringing in the General Assembly Hall while a meeting was in progress. The ringing of cellular phones interferes with the delivery of statements and disrupts the orderly proceeding of the meetings. In that regard, I urge members of delegations to turn their cellular phones off or to keep them in silent mode while in the General Assembly Hall. I thank members for their cooperation.

The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Alpha Oumar Konaré, President of the Republic of Mali.

President Konaré (*spoke in French*): A special session of the General Assembly devoted to children will be convened in September 2001, and I wish to begin my statement with this loving cry from the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF): children come first; children are our future. We look forward to a future without child soldiers and child victims of armed conflict; without trafficking in children to exploit and enslave them; without violence and cruelty to children; without the exploitation of child labour. The future is for children, for children who are better educated and better cared for.

And for the people of Mali, that future must not be made in the image of the present, a present of great poverty in material terms. This situation is not a matter of fate. It is the result of insufficient payment for our products; of the crushing debt burden; of our growing oil bills; of the lack of investment; and perhaps also of the poor management of our economies and of poor economic choices — but of inappropriate cooperation policies as well.

There are solutions that can change this situation, that can bring about increased income, faster and more sustained growth and the conditions for sustainable human development. The war on poverty should take account of the specific characteristics of each country and should show respect for the disadvantaged and for the thousands of men and women, organizations and institutions that have always been waging that war.

We have to free up initiatives, especially private initiatives and those of civil society and non-governmental organizations, to consolidate local human resources and national capacities, to increase official development assistance, and to consider a more collective management of hydrocarbons in the spirit of the San José Agreement. We must also make greater use of the technological revolution and new information technologies.

In that connection we should pay special attention to the World Summit on Information Society to be convened in 2003 by the International

Telecommunication Union with the participation of all parties concerned.

We need a climate of freedom and the rule of law in order to create a context conducive to good governance, to the fight against corruption and to participation by populations in all their diversity, especially cultural diversity, in the management of their affairs and in the free choice of their representatives.

We must have a clear, unambiguous common position that condemns brutal disruption of the democratic process. Military coups cannot be condemned in Africa accepted elsewhere. We have to prevent by all means genocide and flagrant violations of human rights.

We must also consider isolating regimes at war that refuse mediation efforts by the international community. We have to fight for greater human security by condemning the use of anti-personnel landmines and the secret nuclear arms race; by fighting against the proliferation of and illicit trafficking in light weapons; and by supporting the work of national, regional and international coalitions which include all of the actors concerned, including Governments and civil societies.

We have to condemn the physical mutilation of human beings, rejecting any self-proclaimed, so-called national amnesty following killings, and rejecting the culture of impunity.

Strengthening the culture of peace and human rights education will be the pillar of democratic progress and will support the emergence of a truly diverse community of democracies that are based on universal principles and far from holding to one single ideology. In this regard, we welcome the creation in Warsaw last June of the Community of Democracies, which will favour the expansion of democratic principles throughout the world.

Democratic progress in Africa feeds the momentum of regional and subregional integration. It has led to the creation of the African Union, which will enable our continent to be more responsible, to propose its own true alternatives to its problems and to assert its presence among all the international organizations. The African Union will create the conditions for a true partnership for irreversible globalization — globalization that is not simply an economic process and is not synonymous with exclusion, with just the logic of the market or with an unbridled quest for profit and wealth. Globalization will be synonymous with sharing, with opening up to products from the South and with social justice. It must have a human face, or it will not be for us.

Despite its negative media image of being a continent of wars and of violence that often springs from a lack of democracy, of being a continent of calamities and disasters, Africa remains a continent with formidable assets, a continent that looks to the future with confidence. Today we intend to take up the duty of our generation in the struggle against poverty and disease, in mounting an unprecedented crusade against AIDS in a spirit of solidarity, even overcoming taboos, because we will not let ourselves die. Out of every ten people who have AIDS, nine are in Africa.

We also want to take up the duty of our generation to fight ignorance. Education, especially of young people and women, is our top priority. It must enlighten the new millennium and inaugurate the new century. We also want to fight environmental degradation and to preserve our common land.

The duty of a generation demands the solidarity of a generation. None of those objectives will be achieved without a greater democratization of the United Nations, through the expansion of the Security Council, so that it becomes more effective and legitimate and better represents the States and peoples of the world. The desired reform should also include the effective exercise by the General Assembly, as the supreme world forum, of all its prerogatives, and the strengthening of the Economic and Social Council so that it can play the role entrusted to it by the Charter.

None of this can be achieved if, at the dawn of this new, twenty-first century and of this new, third millennium, individuals and peoples are not placed at the heart of our concerns. As the Secretary-General has eloquently pointed out, we need to undertake a true dialogue of civilizations — a dialogue based on solidarity, the law, tolerance and remembering; a dialogue that never forgets slavery, colonialism, fascism, xenophobia, racism, the fate of Palestine.

Glory to man, and may the United Nations live in a world of peace, solidarity, sharing and social justice. Please God that this Millennium Assembly will be a decisive step forward.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Frederick J. T. Chiluba, President of the Republic of Zambia.

President Chiluba (Zambia): We have come to New York not only to celebrate, but, most important, to reflect on our achievements in the last millennium and to ponder our future. This occasion gives us the opportunity to redefine the working mechanisms of a United Nations which should be people-centred.

It is regrettable that, so many years after the establishment of this body, global peace is still far from being achieved, while the war on want is in dire jeopardy, as the vast majority of the world's population continues to live in abject poverty. Poverty is not an accident, but a result of inequitable economic and political interaction in which the weak continue to be deprived of resources necessary for development. It is totally unacceptable that — in this day and age of modern technology and the information superhighway — squalor, misery and disease continue to ravage millions of our people, especially women and children, who bear the brunt of poverty.

It is imperative for the international community to search its moral conscience and focus on this serious blemish. Measures to address this situation are clear. They include improved market access, deep and broader debt relief, foreign direct investment and other capital inflows, and financial and technical support in the multilateral trading system. The launch of the enhanced Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Debt Initiative by the G-8 countries has had little impact on debt and poverty. Eligibility for and access to the HIPC initiative must be more open in order to benefit many more countries that are in desperate need of support. Development partners that have not done so should strengthen their efforts to honour the longstanding undertaking to allocate 0.15 per cent of their gross national product as overseas development assistance to least developed countries, and more donors should move towards the 0.2 per cent target.

The impact of aid has been limited not only by its declining volume, but also by the lack of concrete action to address the issues of concern to developing countries. The world shares a common humanity, whose essence must go beyond mere rhetoric to concrete action to eliminate the obvious imbalances that continue to exacerbate poverty and marginalization. The United Nations must as a matter of urgency give poverty eradication the priority it deserves. We must develop clear, action-oriented programmes to combat this scourge, which claims more victims than wars. It is futile to claim a common global humanity while perpetuating structures of injustice and inequality.

Given political will and determination, poverty can be eliminated from the face of the world. The solutions to this crisis in large measure depend on the restructuring of the United Nations itself. In its present form the United Nations lacks the capacity to respond adequately to these problems. It is for this reason that my Government is calling for recognition of the need to energize and refocus the Organization as a matter of urgency, to enable it respond to these challenges. The United Nations should be made more viable in order to support transparency and good governance, improve human rights, preserve the environment, consolidate democracy and improve the standards of living of our people. It must be given the capacity to deal with the serious conditions and circumstances that continue to afflict the globe.

It is a contradiction in terms that while we have been championing democratization across the globe, we have not been able to democratize the Security Council.

As we commemorate the millennium, we should give hope to the war-afflicted peoples in many regions of the world by finding lasting solutions to the causes of conflicts.

Africa has been hardest hit by these conflicts. We, the members of this family of nations, must speed up our reaction to such crises. Our slow response has on many occasions proved very costly, leading to the loss of many lives.

We in Africa have recognized that military and other unconstitutional upheavals are the major causes of political instability. As a result, the Organization of African Unity (OAU) has adopted the "red card" principle, meaning that any OAU member State whose Government comes into power by unconstitutional means will immediately be suspended from the Organization until that Government restores democratic rule. The United Nations, in my opinion, needs to adopt a similar declaration to eliminate the unconstitutional removal of elected Governments.

My Government hopes that the unity of purpose expressed at this Summit will provide a historic opportunity to all of us to agree on a process for a fundamental review of the role of, and challenges facing, the United Nations.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Stjepan Mesić, President of the Republic of Croatia.

President Mesić (*spoke in Croatian*) (*English text provided by the delegation*): Time is running short. The moments in which we all intuitively feel that humankind is at a crucial crossroads are rare indeed. One such moment is now.

The twentieth century was a period of immense progress of science and technology. Man has soared into the air, stepped on the Moon and reached for the stars. Man has plunged into the depths of the sea and has begun to exploit the submarine world. He has linked and shrunk the world by information and communication technologies. At the same time, he has gained better knowledge, if not awareness, of himself. The causes of many diseases and the drugs for their treatment have been discovered, and the human genome has been mapped.

On the other hand, the twentieth century was marked by two world wars, two authoritarian systems with global ambitions, the cold war, the global arms race and the bipolar world. But, although a new global conflict has been avoided, confrontations have nevertheless remained.

In such a world — and I am confident that we all share this awareness — we must provide full support to this global Organization, the United Nations, and endeavour to make it, through common efforts, the most relevant and efficient factor in the present-day world, an Organization which every nation will truly experience as its own. I have in mind a regenerated and, in every respect, revitalized United Nations, capable of responding to the challenges of the new century and providing the much needed framework for efforts focused on strengthening security and on the achievement of progress and prosperity for all.

I believe that this eminent gathering is the opportunity to welcome the major contribution of the United Nations and, in particular, of the current Secretary-General, Kofi Annan. We firmly support his vision of a world befitting man and his fight against evil, a vision which has systematically inspired him throughout his rich career and which is also the point of departure of his proposal and call for a thorough reform of the United Nations structure and activity, including the reform of the Security Council and the peacekeeping operation system, and recognition of the role of the General Assembly.

It is with a sense of pride that I address the Assembly today on behalf of the Republic of Croatia, a small European country which has experienced war and is now affected by the many ills of a country undergoing transition. We need, urge and count on the assistance of the international community in overcoming the consequences of the war and strengthening the institutions of civil society and democracy. Croatia now seeks and is beginning to achieve its link-up with the Euro-Atlantic integrations and the European Union. Firmly committed to such foreign policy goals, we also expect their equally firm and encouraging support in this endeavour. We are still faced with the challenges of issues such as Prevlaka and the succession to the former Yugoslavia, which ought to be dealt with in accordance with the principle of the inviolability of internationally recognized borders, international law and equality.

Today I urge Members again to pool our efforts and actions, lest we should disappoint the millions of those who in the twentieth century gave their lives for a better tomorrow, as well as those who will spend the greater part of their lives in the twenty-first century. Let us help the young in the poor countries, as well as in the rich countries, to overcome the frustration with which they are currently faced, although for different reasons. Time is running short; let us set off before it is too late.

The path ahead is clear. Let us follow the signpost offered us by the Secretary-General in his report; let us breathe life into it. Let us start from the point of departure. Let us secure the recognition of the values of freedom, equality and the fundamental rights of States, peoples and, primarily, individuals. Let us secure the recognition of principles, and strengthen the instruments and standards of the fight against discrimination, intolerance, supremacy and dependence of any kind.

Let us harness our forces and endure in our efforts to curb the arms race, which is wasteful and

lethal in every respect. Let us conclude new treaties and reinforce our support for existing treaties covering this field, particularly with regard to mine control and the control of small-bore weapons production and trade.

Let us espouse the positive achievements and promises of globalization, and attenuate its negative implications by favouring economic relations which will provide for the gradual emergence of poor countries from their dire predicaments. Let us reform the international financial institutions, but let us not, in the process, neglect or unilaterally avoid the discipline and commitments imposed by global interdependence.

Let us fight for the preservation of our rivers, mountains, seas and oceans, our common heritage on this planet. Let us commit ourselves to compliance with the undertakings we have assumed, because we thereby also preserve the basis of our own existence.

In conclusion, let me call on the Assembly to confirm our dedication to peace and to the protection of all rights of every human being, because relations of genuine equality on this global scale can only be established on such a foundation. Human life is the supreme value, and this is why we have the right and the obligation to stand up in its protection, wherever and by whomever it may be jeopardized, through our common global Organization.

The key to the future is in our hands. The future will be of our own doing. Let us boldly open the door of the new century and the new millennium. Let us do it together, here and now, for the world is at a turning point and time is running short.

Let me take this opportunity to thank all those who have expressed their sympathy over the tragic death of a Croatian citizen, Pero Simundza, who was killed in West Timor in the service of the United Nations.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Leonid Kuchma, President of Ukraine.

President Kuchma *(spoke in Ukrainian)*: Speaking from this high rostrum, I feel probably the same as everybody present here — responsibility, solidarity and inspiration. Our participation in the Summit reaffirms our commitment to and support for the foundations of world order, based on the underlying principles of the Charter of the United Nations. These principles should continue to serve as the basis for the system of international relations in the next millennium.

In historic terms, the United Nations was brought into existence not so long ago. Even less time has elapsed since the creation of the newly independent States, including Ukraine. But even within this short period of time we have learned a lot. We know what the peoples of our countries want.

Like every people on earth, my compatriots want to live in a democratic country, without fear for their future and the life and destiny of coming generations. It has been from this angle that we perceive the role and place of the United Nations in the twenty-first century.

Disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons remain one of the essential tasks to be addressed by the United Nations and the world community. Not so long ago, Ukraine took an unprecedented step by renouncing the world's third largest nuclear arsenal. That gesture of goodwill, dictated by the responsibility for strengthening peace and for the future of mankind, gives us the right to call upon other States to follow this way.

I am convinced that nuclear weapons are useless and unpromising as an instrument of State policy. It is necessary to do everything possible to make sure that in the new millennium mankind gets rid once and for all of the fear of devastating nuclear disaster. In this respect, we support the idea of convening a worldwide international conference to work out ways and means of eliminating such a threat.

The United Nations should continue to play a key role in maintaining the international peace and security. It is quite obvious that such hazardous diseases as conflicts should be treated long before their eruption. I believe that today, as never before, there is an acute need to develop a comprehensive strategy of the United Nations for conflict prevention that should be based on a large-scale use of preventive diplomacy and peace-building.

It is on this premise that a peacekeeping philosophy of the United Nations and its Member States in the next millennium should be built. A secure and equitable world would be difficult to achieve without resolute and uncompromising response by the entire world community to new challenges related to the process of globalization. It seems that possible

catastrophic consequences of some of them have not yet been fully realized.

Completely sharing the views expressed by previous speakers regarding the threat of international terrorism, I would like to draw particular attention to one of its specific manifestations, international computer terrorism. Unfortunately, criminals and malefactors have been increasingly enjoying the advantages of the information revolution. I would like to invite you to consider the appropriateness of working out an international instrument to combat computer terrorism.

The best and most reliable weapon of peace is steady economic development. For developing countries and countries with economies in transition, the main factors for success in economic reforms and poverty eradication programmes consist in obtaining free access to world markets, in liberalizing trade and resolving external debt problems. It is in this domain that both the United Nations and the international financial institutions can launch their initiatives.

Ensuring proper living conditions for future generations from the environmental standpoint is another urgent task that requires our joint and concerted efforts. In Ukraine, there is a clear understanding of the danger caused by the careless exploitation of natural resources and the use of new technologies.

Our people have been suffering the consequences of the largest technological cataclysm of the twentieth century, the Chernobyl nuclear power plant accident. We have made a decision to shut down this nuclear power plant by December 15th, 2000. This decision gives us an opportunity to work out a mechanism for consolidating efforts at all levels — national, regional and international — to resolve social, economic and environmental problems that affect the peace and security of individual countries and of all the humankind.

Time requires of all of us to act in unity with resolve and to assume the responsibility for the future of the United Nations. In the twenty-first century, the Organization should be provided with such capabilities, financial resources and structures that will allow us effectively to serve those on behalf of whom and for whom it was established.

I am convinced that by strengthening the United Nations the world community could significantly enhance its capacity to withstand the dangers and threats, to respond to the challenges of our time and to ensure stability, justice and predictability of international relations.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency, Retired Flight-Lieutenant, Jerry John Rawlings, President of the Republic of Ghana.

President Rawlings: The end of one millennium and the beginning of another marks a focal point for the hopes and expectations of peoples across the world. While there were great social and scientific achievements during the past century, we also have to admit that deprivation and inequality continue to grow.

The report of the Secretary-General to this Summit captures the challenges and the means to address them very comprehensively. We support the thrust of the report, and we call for international commitment to urgent action. In today's globalized world, we must not only ensure social justice internally, but we must also incorporate it in own our global interactions.

The failure in the past to recognize and apply the principles of equity and justice in international relations has determined the present unacceptable conditions of poverty, marginalization, criminality, the spread of disease, environmental degradation and global social disorder. Using the economic and technological edge of our millennium and converging ethical world-views, I believe as most of us do, that we can reverse these conditions and pursue the objectives of socially stable global societies, emphasizing trade, debt reduction or debt alleviation and the containment of the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

Education, particularly access to good quality basic education, provides the basis for the building of tolerant, socially stable communities. We must therefore mobilize the $7 billion a year needed to meet the educational costs of providing primary education over the next 10 years for the 130 million children in developing countries who do not now have access to it. Our efforts to strengthen education must necessarily include the education and empowerment of women, with emphasis on the girl child.

As a leading contributor to United Nations and regional peacekeeping, Ghana believes that regional or subregional efforts to contain conflict can only augment United Nations efforts to maintain international peace and security. This is best assured if structural weaknesses within United Nations peacekeeping operations are addressed.

If developing countries are to ensure for their peoples the decent quality of life which flows from a stable, developed environment, their capacity to govern responsibly needs to be reinforced, particularly through increased development assistance. The absence of strong and resilient institutions in regions like Africa has encouraged corruption from within and without.

I should like to speak for a few more minutes on the issue of corruption. Corruption is a global phenomenon. However, Africa, in particular, has suffered especially severe damage — materially, socially, politically and morally. Seemingly, it is the only, or the most, corrupt continent in the world. Admittedly, Africa may have had — it probably still has — a few notably corrupt and tyrannical leaders and Governments. It may also be true that our continent is not yet free from this blight, which has drained some of our countries of resources, both material and human, which should have been used to improve the quality of life of the poor and the disadvantaged. Developing countries have to check corruption, but we are also entitled to demand that the developed world does not thrust corruption upon us.

Where do the proceeds of this corruption end up in the long run? They end up in the vaults of the financial and banking institutions of the Western world. For every dollar of corrupt money that is kept in Western banks, one African child may die, two African children starve and three African children suffer from disease and ignorance resulting from lack of health care or of education. There will be less corruption in Africa if there is no place to hide the proceeds of corruption or if the proceeds of corruption — once uncovered, as has been done — are returned to their real owners, the people of Africa, being served by Governments of integrity.

Companies and multinationals that are apparently reputable are known to engage in underhand deals with high-level officials in order to gain advantages over their competitors or to carry out unethical operations. Recently one Western company so seriously undermined a rival company from the same country in a bid for an important water project in my country, by falsely impugning its business ethics, that the latter company, which had offered much better terms, pulled out of the bid. Its withdrawal from the bidding process does not only represent a loss of integrity; it is Ghana's loss, as the water project still remains on the drawing board today. Some of my people will continue to drink unhealthy water, if they drink any at all.

In another case of competition between Western countries in Europe and in the Americas — countries on both sides of the Atlantic ocean that believe in democracy and pontificate on the subject, and on the free market system and competition — questionable arguments based on technical rules of origin, supported by false declarations by officials sent to my country by one of them in Europe, were employed in order to deny European market access to a Ghanaian value-added product, just because it was perceived to be an appendage of an American company. This is a very sad extension of the Western countries' own trade wars. Once again, we in the so-called condemned world are the ones who suffer.

A World Bank report recently blacklisted 29 companies for corruption in contract-awarding procedures in an African country. Which country? Our sister country, Nigeria. The overwhelming majority — more than 80 per cent — of the corrupt companies blacklisted by the World Bank, which is a Western institution, incidentally, were not Nigerian companies, but were from the very Western world that condemns us for our corruption.

That was bad enough. But even worse is the corruption of the domestic front men of such companies, whose corrupt moneys continue to be retained in Western banking and financial institutions and about whom there is a dead, stony silence. Politicians run the risk of being shot in a coup or a revolt, or of dying for their alleged corruption. Yet, whenever the money is uncovered, I can assure the Assembly that for every one politician or leader, there could be five corrupt African business collaborators whose corrupt moneys remain untouched in Western banks. Yet, as usual, it is the politicians who always face the risks.

Only last week, in an unprecedented diplomatic faux pas, a high-ranking Western diplomat in my country openly declared at a public forum that leading

Western companies, including companies from his own country, offer bribes to Government officials in order to influence the award of contracts. In other words, Western Governments know about the corruption of their countries' companies operating in my continent of Africa, yet keep dead quiet about it. This is not good enough.

Questionable and dubious mergers and acquisitions are putting enterprises in Africa and the developing world, and even in the developed world itself, out of business.

I am convinced that Africa's political independence will remain meaningless unless it is reflected in a transparent Africa, a corruption-free Africa, an accountable Africa and a trusted Africa. But the temptations of the developed world must stop, if this vision is to be achieved.

Finally, the ongoing reform of our Organization must aim at achieving a world body that is development-oriented and representative, and take into account that that representation should not leave out responsibilities at the Security Council level. It also must become democratic and responsive. Making and using the United Nations as a real forum of the people, responsive to the global challenges of our time, will be our challenge as we embark on a new millennium.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Hugo Chávez Frías, President of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

President Chávez Frías (*spoke in Spanish*): Venezuela and its Bolivarian people salute this Millennium Summit and, through it, all the peoples and countries of the world.

Two millenniums ago, Jesus Christ came to fight for justice, for peace, for dignity and for life. He died crucified. Five hundred years ago, the encounter and the conflict between civilizations were accelerated through a savage process of conquest, colonization, exploitation and domination. Fifty-five years ago, the United Nations was created in order to fight for security, equality and the happiness of peoples.

Since Jesus' last supper so long ago in the year 33, up to this Millennium Summit of 2000, how many summits have men held! It sometimes seems that we jump from summit to summit while our peoples keep moaning from abyss to abyss. Despite fighters such as Christ, the good intentions of colonizers such as Father de las Casas and the good will of many in the United Nations during the past half-century, today's world remains marked and burdened by misery, inequality, hunger and death.

Simón Bolívar, the liberator of South America and the leader who inspired the revolution that is taking place today in Venezuela, dreamed one day, in his vision for justice, dreamed about scaling the Chimborazo summit. There, over the perpetual snows of the spine of the Andes, he imagined that he met Father Time, a wise, long-bearded old man. Following a dialogue on that peak, Father Time told him: "Go and tell the truth to man".

Today, I have come here as the standard-bearer of that Bolivarian dream to proclaim to the United Nations and the world: Let us tell the truth to man. Let us give meaning to the word "truth". We have two interpretations that are commonly accepted by many philosophical schools to define truth. The first holds that truth is not an abstraction or a dream. The truth is something that is happening at this very moment to every one of us and to all of our people. The second holds that truth is the only thing that links us to the whole, to all humankind. The Indian philosopher Jiddu Krishnamurti said that the truth is not static, a fixed point. The truth moves; it is a dynamic that goes many ways.

Of course, the United Nations was created in a historic moment. We were emerging from the horror of the Second World War and, under the looming threat of conflict, humankind rallied around that truth in order to put an end to that infernal human butchery in which millions died. But this truth has been left behind. It is no longer the truth today and has disappeared with time. The time has come at this Millennium Summit to make that truth a creative hope, a colossal challenge. Let us leave it behind. We cannot keep clinging stubbornly to a truth that is no longer true, that was valid at only one moment of history.

Of course, in the world today, millions of people continue to die every day, but not as a result of bombs or world wars. The truth is different today. Millions are dying today as a result of hunger, inequality, exploitation and poverty. Death is triumphant throughout the planet even as we meet here. That is why Venezuela adds it voice to the clamour of the wretched of the Earth, as Frantz Fanon would say, to

call for a structural transformation of the United Nations, a radical change of the Organization.

We must democratize and expand the Security Council so that we can find the truth for all. The truth cannot be imposed by a minority, because then it would not be the truth. We would be living a lie of imposition and inequality. Venezuela joins that cry. Only in this way, can we the people begin to emerge from this abyss and scale the heights. A new world compact of the United Nations is necessary. We need a new democratic consensus in the United Nations. Venezuela joins that cry.

We must build on this new reality and on the new moment in which we are living. Only in this way can we hear the voices of the silent. I could have dispensed with these five minutes this morning and spared representatives the time of listening to me. I might have taken only three seconds. Why do I say three seconds? Because, according to statistics, every three seconds a child dies of hunger in this world. One, two, three: that is our truth.

It is said in the Bible that those who have eyes must see and those who have ears must hear. Let me say that those who have a heart should listen to the cries of the wretched of the Earth. Only in this way can we comply with the dictum laid down in the Book of Ecclesiastes: "For everything there is an appointed time, ...and an appropriate time for every matter on Earth." (*The Holy Bible, Ecclesiastes, 3:1*)

On this planet, let us build our new truth and act so that we may say that the time of the people has come. This is the call of Venezuela, on behalf of the Bolivarian peoples and of humanity: let us save the world!

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Heydar Aliyev, President of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

President Aliyev *(spoke in Russian)*: The twentieth century is coming to an end. Humankind will recall this century with its spiritual and intellectual progress, two bloody world wars, the collapse of empires and the emergence of dozens of new sovereign States, the tensions of the cold war and the collective efforts towards peace and stability. What will the world look like in the coming century? The relegation of the confrontation of two systems to the pages of history and the prevalent expansion of ideas of democracy and market economy should contribute to building the kind of world where the interests of all States are taken into account and a genuine equal partnership is established.

However, an analysis of the development of the international environment leads us to the bitter conclusion that stereotypes of rivalry are still alive. We are living through a very uneasy period, where a single wrong step could create an explosion of a situation and lead to a tragic return to the past. We face the challenge of treading a difficult path towards building a just and secure world order, and we all need to strive to achieve that goal.

The main trend at the present stage of the world's development is globalization. We are all concerned about the prospects of this complex and ambiguous phenomenon. Globalization should contribute to ensuring sustainable development, integrity and a stability of systems for governing nations, to overcome discrimination in economic relations and to improve the welfare of peoples.

The supremacy of the principles and norms of international law, the evolutionary character of change, partnership and support by the more advanced nations to less developed States, mutual trust and recognition of national distinctions in light of the commitment to values cherished by all humanity should be the determining vectors of this process. The strength of democratic development is in its diversity.

Azerbaijan is making its contribution to the positive development of globalization. Using its geographic location, resources and potential, which are of geo-strategic importance to the whole world, my country has been effectively playing the role as a bridge between East and West, originating from a rich historical past and aimed towards the future. We are making enormous efforts to restore the Great Silk Road, to create the Europe-Caucasus-Asia transport corridor, to develop and export the hydrocarbon resources of the Caspian basin to world markets. These projects are of crucial importance for a free and fully-fledged development of nations in several regions of the world. They will give impetus to transnational cooperation and have a decisive impact on the development of the global environment.

However, external threats and internal problems, pressures and involvement in the struggle for spheres of influence have not allowed young and fragile

democracies an opportunity to freely carry out the policy that would meet the interests and expectations of their peoples to strengthen and develop their statehood and to be involved in peaceful development. From the first days of their existence, they were forced to fight a hard battle for independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity. States which have suffered from acts of aggression, seizure of territories and ethnic cleansing, aggressive separatism and terrorism, rightly expect maximally effective action from the United Nations to establish a just and secure world, and to protect the principles of the United Nations Charter.

Unfortunately, the South Caucasus has become a region where all these problems, threats and risks have become stark realities. The main destabilizing factor in the situation in the South Caucasus has been aggression by Armenia against Azerbaijan; this has brought incalculable tragedies to millions of people. As a result of this aggression, Armenian armed forces have occupied 20 per cent of the territory of Azerbaijan, carried out ethnic cleansing and expelled one million Azerbaijanis from their homes. The Security Council of the United Nations passed four resolutions in this respect, unequivocally confirming the sovereignty, territorial integrity and the inviolability of the frontiers of the Republic of Azerbaijan, and which unconditionally demanded the immediate withdrawal of the Armenian armed forces from the occupied lands of Azerbaijan. But, since 1993, and until now, the Security Council's decisions remain a dead letter.

Since 1992, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) has been engaged in the settlement of the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan, but its activities have not been successful. Bilateral discussions between the Presidents of Azerbaijan and Armenia continue, but they, too, have not brought about any results yet. We have had a ceasefire for the last six years, but it is not a solution to the problems.

I appeal to the United Nations to take all necessary measures to implement the relevant Security Council resolutions. Without a settlement to the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan, and other conflicts; without the removal of factors of external pressure, including foreign military presence, it is impossible to achieve peace and security in the region. If the South Caucasus were to acquire political integrity and neutral status, it would permit the establishment of normal mutual relations among the States of the South Caucasus and ensure their harmonious integration into the world economic system.

I extend my gratitude to the organizations within the framework of the United Nations and to the donor countries for their assistance to Azerbaijani refugees and displaced persons who have already been living in a state of poverty for over eight years. We feel an acute need for the continuation and increase of critically important humanitarian assistance until they can return to their homes.

The United Nations has a great responsibility for peace in the world. We pin our hopes on the United Nations. Serious and rational reforms should increase the effectiveness of the Organization, in particular of the Security Council.

Finally, I would like to underline our collective responsibility for peace and security on the planet and express our assurance that the results of the Millennium Summit will be a reliable basis for our journey into the twenty-first century.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Majesty King Harald V, head of State of the Kingdom of Norway.

King Harald V: We must invest in the United Nations. We must give it the strength and resources it needs to accomplish the tasks we have assigned it. We owe it to our forefathers, who made it the object of their highest hopes and aspirations. We owe it to our children and grandchildren, whose future has been placed in our hands. We owe it to ourselves, because our generation has been entrusted with the knowledge to make the right decisions and the means to carry them out.

The United Nations rose from the ashes of the Second World War — from the recognition that our powers of destruction had reached the point where peace was the only option. The advent of nuclear weapons reinforced this realization.

Yet the bloodletting, devastation and misery of armed conflict are still very much a reality in Europe, in the Americas, in Asia and in Africa. The United Nations should be empowered to deal effectively with the changing nature of conflict, to detect the seeds of conflict at an early stage, to manage conflict where it cannot be prevented, to mandate and equip United Nations peace operations that can deal with the

complex nature of modern conflict. The United Nations should be empowered to provide post-conflict rehabilitation, to alleviate the suffering and protect the rights of innocent civilians, of innocent women and children, to punish genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity.

It is essential to eliminate the causes of armed conflict. Most of them are closely linked to poverty, underdevelopment, and to the violation of human rights. The Norwegian Nobel Committee has long recognized these linkages by awarding the Nobel Peace Prize not only to the United Nations peacekeeping forces, but also to the International Labour Organization, the United Nations Children's Fund, and twice to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

The fight to eliminate poverty is the overriding challenge of the international community at the turn of the millennium. The Secretary-General is advancing not only the cause of development, education and health; not only the cause of peace; not only the cause of human rights and empowerment; but all three. They are inextricably linked and mutually reinforcing.

We have all agreed on the goals for international development. We have the knowledge to achieve them, and we have the resources to achieve them. We live in an age of unparalleled promise and prosperity. We will not be forgiven — and we should not be forgiven — if we fail to fulfil this promise, if we fail to share this prosperity with the neediest among us.

The elimination of poverty is not only a bridge to peace and development, not only a bridge to human rights and individual dignity, but also a bridge to the preservation of the environment for future generations. For we shall never be able to cooperate effectively on how to husband the scarce resources of our planet, how to prevent the degradation of the environment, as long as so many are trapped in hopeless poverty.

So let us respond to the Secretary-General's call for a strengthened and revitalized United Nations not with indifference or pessimism, but with the resolve and determination it merits. I pledge that my country will do so, and together we will succeed.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Alhaji Ahmad Tejan Kabbah, President of the Republic of Sierra Leone.

President Kabbah: Let me first of all pay tribute to all those who have lost their lives in the cause of peace under the United Nations flag.

Our world Organization comprises independent sovereign States. But the United Nations is about people, all people, irrespective of their colour, creed, or social and economic status.

We therefore commend our Secretary-General for reminding us that the United Nations is for and about people, about their welfare, their safety and security, and about their future. He has done so by choosing "We the peoples" as the title of his Millennium report, a document in which he provided us with not just an agenda for the years ahead, but concrete recommendations for our collective action on behalf of the peoples of the world. We must try harder, in the words of the United Nations Charter,

> "to employ international machinery for the promotion of the economic and social advancement of all peoples".

As we enter the new millennium, we have come to realize that the tasks of this Organization have become more difficult. Most of the problems and issues that the United Nations was created to tackle just over half a century ago have taken different forms and dimensions. They have become more complex and more challenging. Many of them seem to have become immune to the prescriptions and remedies we have developed over the years to tackle, resolve or eradicate them.

In several parts of the world, we have been witnessing the emergence of renewed manifestations of political and social repression, ethnic intolerance, racist tendencies, and rampant economic inequality. A few years ago, the concern was about the so-called cold war. Today we are being confronted by widespread "hot wars" — real wars that continue to take a heavy toll on the lives of millions of people.

How then do we act on the challenges of the new century? How can the United Nations help meet the challenges that the Secretary-General has identified in his Millennium report? In my view, the answers lie in the process of adaptation.

The United Nations must adapt and re-equip itself to deal with the new manifestation of the perennial problems of human insecurity and underdevelopment. In many instances, we have to develop new approaches

and new people-centred strategies for addressing the emerging and complex issues ahead.

In several ways, Sierra Leone has tested the capacity of the United Nations to adapt and to deal with some of the challenges of the new century. For example, in the areas of human rights protection and the administration of justice, the United Nations has been called upon to adapt to a unique situation by devising an innovative process of dealing with the phenomenon of impunity. The people of Sierra Leone called upon the United Nations for assistance, and the Organization responded positively with respect to the establishment of a special court to bring to justice persons who may have committed gross violations of human rights and grave offences in violation of international law and domestic criminal law.

In the area of conflict management, the Government of Sierra Leone recently accepted a Security Council ban, albeit a temporary one, on the export of Sierra Leone diamonds. Although this has resulted in the loss of much needed revenue, we did it in order to strengthen the Organization's capacity to deal with a new menace to international peace and security, especially in Africa: the menace of conflict diamonds. We welcome the proposal of the United Kingdom to place the issue on the agenda of the Millennium Assembly.

Also in the area of conflict management, Sierra Leone expects to host more than 16,000 United Nations peacekeepers in one of the largest operations the United Nations has ever undertaken. May I, on behalf of all the people of Sierra Leone, take this opportunity to express my profound gratitude to the Security Council for giving the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) additional responsibilities within its current mandate. Our thanks go also to those countries that have contributed troops and other resources to UNAMSIL. Their efforts have given true meaning to the term collective security. The situation in Sierra Leone as it developed demanded an appropriate response from our Organization, an organization that has pledged in its Charter to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war.

As we cross the threshold of the new millennium, the international community must rededicate itself to the pursuit of peace and human security in all its forms. As the British Prime Minister, Mr. Tony Blair, suggested yesterday, nowhere is this need for rededication more pronounced than in Africa, the most disadvantaged continent on our planet today.

We must, as a community of nations, redouble our efforts to eliminate the root causes of internal conflict. We must do so in the realization that internal conflict in any part of the world represents a threat to the rest. The evidence is overwhelming, whether it involves efforts to combat terrorism, contain health hazards such as malaria and HIV/AIDS or end ethnic intolerance. The universality of human security demands collective responsibility on the part of all nations.

There are, of course, various dimensions of human security. But for many States Members of the United Nations, including Sierra Leone, the most pervasive threat to human security is internal conflict. The traditional approaches to this phenomenon are no longer adequate. We in Sierra Leone have experienced the linkage between armed conflict and issues of human security. While we welcome, for instance, recent decisions by the Security Council in the area of peace and security, we strongly believe that these should be accompanied by even more innovative responses by our development partners, and in particular by international financial and development institutions.

Internal security and stability are the most critical bases for economic and social development. Orthodox prescriptions for re-launching the economies of post-conflict countries do not go far enough. The Bretton Woods institutions advise us, no doubt with good intentions, to invest in the education and health of our peoples. But we submit that such advice should not become conditionalities to the detriment of national security, for without security — as in the case of my country — even limited socio-economic gains could be swept away virtually overnight. The normal rules and procedures for development cooperation require greater flexibility to enable rapid and viable action for rehabilitating post-conflict countries. Such action will encourage and inspire those who have been misled and who have resorted to violence to give up their weapons of war and return to normal life as responsible citizens.

Meeting the challenges of the new millennium requires us to accept the fact that Government action alone cannot solve all our problems. Partnership in one form or another is required. This Summit, the largest assembly of world leaders, affords us the opportunity

to re-examine our priorities, redefine our mission, sharpen our vision of the new century and provide the political platform on which the United Nations family can place its priority programmes for alleviating or improving the human condition throughout the world.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Thabo Mbeki, President of the Republic of South Africa.

President Mbeki: We have gathered at this important place to discuss what we might do together to address the problems that confront our common world. The billions of people we represent expect that a strong, clear, unequivocal and understandable message of hope will come out of this historic Millennium Summit. We will certainly have to jostle with the various pagan gods at whose feet we prostrate ourselves, over all of whom tower the gods of inertia, of the market and of globalization.

Scattered through the second millennium were terrible human-made moments of anti-human actions that brought great pain and misery to millions of people. Slavery was one of these. Colonialism was another, as was apartheid. The world wars were other such moments. The Holocaust carried out by Nazi Germany was such a human-made moment, as was the more recent genocide visited upon the people of Rwanda only six years ago. For many of us, all this deliberate and savage violence against human beings represents history, things that have come and gone. We choose to forget them, allowing the dead to bury the dead.

However, none of us can forget the living, whose mandates have given us the privileged possibility of speaking from this podium. Billions among the living struggle to survive in conditions of poverty, deprivation and underdevelopment. These conditions are as offensive to everything humane as anything we decry about the second millennium.

The poor of the world stand at the gates of the comfortable mansions occupied by each and every King, Queen, President, Prime Minister or Minister privileged to attend this unique meeting. The question these billions ask is, "What are you doing? You in whom we have placed our trust, what are you doing to end the deliberate and savage violence against us, which every day sentences many of us to a degrading and unnecessary death?"

Those who stand at the gates are desperately hungry for food, through no fault of their own. They die from preventable diseases through no fault of their own. They have to suffer a humiliating loss of human dignity they do not wish on anybody, including the rich.

These are the victims of the systemic violence against human beings that we accept as normal, and for which we judge the second millennium adversely. And yet, that millennium created the conditions for us to end this modern tragedy. Part of the naked truth is that the second millennium provided humanity with the capital, the technology and the human skills to end poverty and underdevelopment throughout the world. Another part of that truth is that we have refused to use this enormous capacity to end the contemporary, deliberate and savage violence of poverty and underdevelopment.

Our collective rhetoric conveys promise. The offence is that our actions communicate the message that, in reality, we do not care. We are indifferent. Our actions say the poor must bury the poor.

The fundamental challenge that faces this Millennium Summit is that, in a credible way, we must demonstrate the will to end poverty and underdevelopment in Africa and elsewhere. We must demonstrate the will to succeed, such as was demonstrated by those who died in the titanic struggle against Nazism and fascism, giving birth to this Organization.

If we took this epoch-making decision, it would not be difficult to arrive at the practical decisions about what we need to do to make the United Nations an effective, twenty-first century organization. Thus would we end its slide into a somewhat debased state that becomes a source of problems rather than a critical contributor to the urgent solutions we must find. In this regard, we will have to ensure that the poor play their role not as recipients of largesse and goodwill, but as co-determinants of what happens to the common universe of which they are an important part. The essential question we have to answer at this Millennium Summit is whether we have the courage and the conscience to demonstrate that we have the will to ensure that we accept no situation that will deny any human community its dignity.

I, like the poor at our gates, ask the question, "Will we, at last, respond to this appeal?" All of us,

including the rich, will pay a terrible price if we do not answer practically, "Yes, we do."

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Petru Lucinschi, President of the Republic of Moldova.

President Lucinschi *(spoke in Romanian, English text furnished by the delegation)*: Today, at the intersection of centuries and millenniums, it is natural to cast a critical glance over the past in order to have a clearer outlook for the future. The truth is that many things have changed for the better in recent years. The world has become more homogeneous. The feeling of inferiority, by which the destinies of many nations have been marked, is disappearing now. At the moment when the United Nations was founded, two thirds of its present Members were not yet independent States. Furthermore, in Eastern Europe, of which the Republic of Moldova is a part, the number of countries has doubled.

At the same time, we have to recognize that the process of detente is being accompanied by the proliferation of local conflicts, and poverty has reached huge proportions. Under these conditions, apart from the efforts that every State has to make on its own, only a strong United Nations will be able to offer us equal opportunities for development, by diminishing the gap between prosperity and poverty and by encouraging the new democratic processes. In this respect, there is a need for a deeper definition and more rigorous observation of the rules of conduct at the international level, where the United Nations has to play a central role.

One of the main objectives of the United Nations in the new millennium will be more efficient management of the advances in the fields of information and high technology, so that they can be maintained within the framework of the development of civilization. In this connection, it is necessary to adopt and to implement strictly the guarantee measures of the nuclear security system in order to decrease the size of the more and more sophisticated arsenals, guided by the Treaty on the Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems.

The adaptation of the United Nations to the new realities corresponds entirely to our common interests. However, we have to recognize that, although the accomplishment of these objectives will require efforts from every Member State, the major role is to be played, as before, by the big States. Albert Einstein used to say that powerful States need no ambassadors, their force speaks for itself. As for small States, it does matter how they express themselves. Being realistic, we realize that the security of the twenty-first century will depend on how the big States succeed in understanding and cooperating with each other and on the degree of harmonization of their interests. At the same time, we would like this to take place under conditions of respect for small States' legitimate interests.

There is no doubt that, as the Secretary-General has mentioned in the millennium report, all members of the international community should take advantage of the opportunities of globalization. For this purpose we have to find the corresponding modalities to mobilize all societies, Governments and international financial resources. Only in this way is it possible to build a stable and prosperous world, no matter from which point of the compass one is looking.

The Republic of Moldova reaffirms its support for the further development of the reform process of the United Nations, in particular of the Security Council. We support a moderate increase in the number of permanent and non-permanent Council members and ensuring better representation of the Member States, both the developed and the developing ones.

The Republic of Moldova — a small State confronting transition problems; a State whose territorial integrity is being threatened by the conflict in the eastern regions, caused by the collapse of the Soviet Union; a State facing difficulties as a result of a series of natural disasters that happened this year — sees in the United Nations a hope, a support and a guarantee of the development of every country.

Today the United Nations faces a new era, in which imagination and creativity must be matched by well tempered optimism and authentic pragmatism. The 189 Member States of the United Nations which presently grant personality and substance to the Organization undoubtedly possess the material and intellectual resources, as well as the political will, necessary for the achievement of certain projects serving the general interests of mankind. The Republic of Moldova supports the provisions of the Final Declaration of the Summit and joins the international community in its wish to create a better, peaceful and prosperous world.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Gnassingbé Eyadéma, President of the Togolese Republic.

President Eyadéma (Togo) (*spoke in French*): From this prestigious podium, I first welcome the felicitous initiative of the Secretary-General to convene this year the Millennium Summit, at which we are asked to examine the role of the United Nations in the world at the beginning of the twenty-first century. This extremely relevant initiative comes at a time when the world is entering an era of great change, with the end of the cold war and the dazzling development of information technology.

These transformations command our attention. They invite us to review the way in which we work and organize ourselves, so that we may acquire new and more effective instruments and institutions more suited to the new world realities.

The institution we have created for ourselves has stood the test of time, despite the storms and hurricanes that it has had to brave. It has held firm because its foundations are solid, but this does not mean that it does not need to be revitalized.

It is in this context that I would like to mention two important areas whose image I think the United Nations should transform: on the one hand, peacekeeping, and, on the other, development.

For a number of years many voices have been raised condemning the fact that the composition of the Security Council, the body to which the Charter entrusts in Article 24 the "primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security", no longer reflects current power relationships in the world. As the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, says in his report, its "composition ... today does not fully represent either the character or the needs of our globalized world." (*A/54/2000, para. 44*).

When the United Nations was created in 1945, two thirds of the current Member States were not independent. The world's population was 2.5 billion. Today, it is close to 6 billion. Africa, whose population is over 700 million, is made up of 53 of the 189 Member States of the United Nations. Over a third of the Security Council's debates and deliberations deal with Africa.

We therefore believe that it is high time to review the Council's composition in order to allow new permanent members to be chosen from among the new economic Powers that have emerged since the Second World War, to be joined by developing country regional Powers.

Furthermore, the emergence of new types of conflicts in recent years requires us to better design United Nations peacekeeping operations and to make them more effective. Otherwise, the United Nations would be weakened in its peace missions, as we were able to see in Bosnia, and more recently in Sierra Leone.

We are pleased that the Secretary-General has set up a high-level Panel that has prepared a report on all aspects of peacekeeping operations. Chaired by the former Minister for Foreign Affairs of Algeria, Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi, that Panel made very important recommendations in the report submitted to the Secretary-General on 17 August.

We firmly support recommendation 3, contained in annex III of the report, according to which United Nations peacekeeping forces, once deployed, must be able to fulfil their mandate professionally and successfully. They must also be capable of defending themselves and of controlling those on the ground who would try to undermine their action by violence.

We also support recommendation 4, requesting that the mandates of United Nations peacekeeping forces be clear, credible and achievable. We also wish these operations to be adequately financed. We hope that the Security Council and the Member States of the United Nations will consider favourably the recommendations of the Brahimi report, and will ensure that they are implemented rapidly.

In the area of development, it is clear that multinational and transnational corporations play a crucial role today in world economic affairs. But they are noticeably absent from the United Nations economic forums.

In the same way as work is carried out within the International Labour Organization with the active participation of Government representatives, employers and employees, I believe that it would be desirable, within the Economic and Social Council, for Government representatives to come together with representatives of multinational corporations, who

wield so much influence in the economic sphere. The effectiveness and the impact of that important United Nations body could also be enhanced in this way.

There you have a few thoughts that I wanted to bring to your kind attention.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Festus G. Mogae, President of the Republic of Botswana.

President Mogae: A great many global issues of fundamental importance that need to be mentioned have been mentioned and fully articulated by others, by colleagues whose oratorical brilliance and technical competence I cannot hope to equal, let alone surpass. Consequently, I will confine myself to addressing the scourge of HIV/AIDS in sub-Saharan Africa, including and especially southern Africa.

I stand before the Assembly to claim the dubious distinction of being leader of one of the countries that is most seriously affected by HIV/AIDS in the whole world. The fight against HIV/AIDS is therefore for us the challenge of the millennium.

In the last 25 years we achieved economic growth rates comparable to those of the Asian tigers, attained human development indices that were the envy of many, practised multi-party democracy and accountable and transparent governance, maintained an open society and ran an open economy.

Now we daily witness elderly mothers mourning for the untimely deaths of their beloved children, babies born today only to be buried the next day and a growing population of orphans yearning for parental love and care. These are the traumatizing realities of HIV/AIDS with which we live and with which we have to contend.

Having enjoyed peace and security and steady economic growth, we suddenly find our gains in social advancement reversed by this scourge. The economically active population in our society, our most precious resource, is being decimated. Our life expectancy is calculated to have been reduced by 20 years, from 67 to 47.

It is frightening to note that half of the people who become infected with HIV/AIDS are under the age of 25 years.

One of our major strategies to fight this rampant HIV/AIDS scourge has been to establish a multisectoral National Council that I personally chair. At the executive or technical level, we have established the National AIDS Coordinating Agency, headed by a senior official, to implement anti-HIV programmes. The thrust of our strategy is information, education and communication, and we have combined this with concerted efforts to destigmatize HIV/AIDS. We continue to hold consultative meetings with all key stakeholders. Our HIV/AIDS programmes include the prevention of mother-to-child transmission through the use of anti-retroviral drugs. We have set up Voluntary Testing and Counselling Centres in our major settlements, and more such facilities are being extended to other parts of the country. Community mobilization is being undertaken through house-to-house counselling. We have established alliances with Botswana's youth and other civil society organizations.

Our Government is also implementing a programme of home-based care to ease congestion in the hospitals and other health centres. More manpower and financial resources have been allocated, including through the diversion of development funds towards the fight against HIV/AIDS. We are grateful to Governments, the United Nations system, private organizations and non-governmental organizations that have established partnerships with us in the fight against HIV/AIDS.

So far, the Government of Botswana funds 80 per cent of all HIV/AIDS prevention and care activities, and this may not be sustainable. Some of our children have been infected at their very first experiment with sex. To spread our message as broadly as possible, we have established multi-sectoral HIV/AIDS committees in every town and every village in our country. We are determined to eradicate the scourge, or at least, halt its spread.

The HIV/AIDS pandemic is a global problem which calls for global action. The pandemic threatens human development and social and economic security. There is therefore an urgent need for concerted action on the part of the international community as a whole to fight this scourge.

For mankind to prevail over this scourge, we need commitment and unity of purpose. For those of us most directly affected, one more day of delayed action is a day too late for thousands of our people. Our people are crying out for help. Let us respond while there is still time.

In his report, the Secretary-General has called for "the reduction of HIV infection rates in persons 15 to 24 years of age — by 25 per cent within the most affected countries before the year 2005 and by 25 per cent globally before 2010". (*A/54/2000, para. 128*). To achieve this target, we will need an infusion of tangible and adequate resources.

As developing countries, we cannot deal on our own with the whole spectrum of requisites for education and sensitization, testing and counselling, adolescent reproductive health, prevention of mother-to-child transmissions, acquisition of drugs and medication and care for the affected populations. We therefore need to pool our efforts and resources and work with the United Nations and the private sector to seek an effective remedy for this pandemic.

I am confident that, as world leaders, if we act in unison in addressing this challenge that faces our common humanity, we will have good reason to celebrate our contribution towards saving "succeeding generations from the scourge of war" — war in all its manifestations.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Emomali Rakhmonov, President of the Republic of Tajikistan.

President Rakhmonov (*spoke in Russian*): The hopes and aspirations of all the peoples of the world are focused on the work of our world forum. The peoples of the planet expect us to develop a strategy of partnership that will respond to their key interests and meet their needs.

We are firmly convinced that our Summit provides us with a wonderful opportunity to discuss issues of United Nations restructuring so as to address twenty-first-century goals and to re-evaluate the global challenges faced by humanity at its current stage of development.

Tajikistan wholeheartedly supports the Millennium Assembly's determination to strengthen the key role of the United Nations as a universal mechanism for maintaining international peace and security and for developing multilateral cooperation based on reaching a mutually acceptable balance of interests for all nations.

The process of globalization that is so dramatically influencing the evolution of society should be aimed at eliminating, rather than intensifying, the serious imbalances that divide the world today. Therefore, in order to avoid social, economic and political upheaval and shock and to ensure economic security, we believe that these processes should be backed up by a considered and purposefully oriented social policy, especially in countries with economies in transition.

The United Nations is called upon to encourage processes aimed at reducing the development gap between the rich and poor nations, in particular, by attracting investments to those countries with economies in transition that do not possess oil and gas resources.

Tajikistan shares the view of many that forgiving the accumulated debts of the countries that have gone through large-scale conflicts or natural disasters would provide a powerful impetus to sustainable peace-building in those countries. We are convinced that such measures would free up significant internal resources that could be used for education and health care, for alleviating the consequences of conflicts and for responding more effectively to natural disasters.

Tajikistan is striving to do whatever it can to contribute to the resolution of pressing ecological issues. We call upon the Assembly to support the well-known initiative of our country to proclaim the year 2003 as the "International Year of Freshwater". If, in the coming century, through our consolidated efforts, we are able to ensure access to freshwater for all the people on our planet, we will save every second citizen on the earth from infectious diseases. That is important not only for Tajikistan, but for the entire international community.

If the Sarez Lake dam breaks, billions of cubic metres of water will pour down the nearby valleys, flooding millions of hectares of land and making approximately 5 million citizens of Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan and Afghanistan homeless.

An equally pressing global ecological problem is the Aral Sea crisis, which is the result of the irrational usage of natural resources. These problems can be dealt with only with the assistance of the international community.

The community of nations must take decisive steps and coordinated action to fight international terrorism, the illegal drug trade and the uncontrolled

trade in weapons. Together with our partners in the Commonwealth of Independent States, Tajikistan is seriously concerned that we are being turned into a source of constant threat to the security of other countries, and not only those of Central Asia. We believe that the international community should take extraordinary and significant measures to curb aggression, terrorism and other forms of extremism.

It is important that we increase our activities aimed at achieving a peaceful settlement to the Afghan problem. The lessons to be learned from what has happened show us that only with the firm support of the leading world Powers — first and foremost, Russia and the United States of America — and, of course, with the goodwill of the parties to the conflict, will the United Nations be able to resolve the conflict in Afghanistan. In this connection, we consider the first meeting of the Russian-American working group on Afghanistan, held in Washington in August 2000, to be a promising start.

We believe that the peacekeeping activities of the Organization should be based on full respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of nations and that they should be timely, equal to the situation as it develops and based on the coordinated collective actions of the international community. Only the Security Council has the exclusive right to sanction, on behalf of the international community, the use of force for the purpose of maintaining peace or restoring international peace and security.

It is our sacred duty to future generations not only to protect the United Nations, but, working together with it, to make the world a better and more secure place that is worthy of them so that they can live better and happier lives.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): Before giving the floor to the next speaker, I would like to make an appeal. There are 21 speakers remaining on the list of speakers for this meeting. Since we must exhaust the list at each meeting, I appeal to the participants in the Millennium Summit to respect the five-minute time limit for each speaker. That will allow us to hear all the speakers on the list for this meeting.

The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency the Honourable Bernard Dowiyogo, President of the Republic of Nauru.

President Dowiyogo: The Republic of Nauru is pleased to participate in this historic Millennium Summit.

Despite having joined the United Nations only last year, Nauru values very highly the work of this body and also holds the highest expectations for its success in the new century, since it was through the assistance of the United Nations some thirty-five years ago that the people of Nauru secured the support of the international community for a vote on self-determination.

Having enjoyed thirty-five years of independence, Nauru is greatly encouraged that, through the assistance of the United Nations, our East Timor brothers and sisters have secured a path towards independence. On this occasion we join in prayer with the families of the three United Nations personnel killed yesterday on duty in East Timor and yet we can remain confident that the continued support of the United Nations will see the people of East Timor through to their final step of nationhood.

On the other hand, our Melanesian brothers and sisters in West Papua are still striving to break the imposition of colonial domination and foreign control following the so-called act of free choice in 1969. It is imperative that West Papua be given the rightful opportunity of a democratic referendum by its indigenous peoples. The United Nations cannot stand by and witness the destruction of the people of West Papua, where already more than a half million people have been lost as a result of human rights abuses. We must not witness another catastrophe in this area as occurred in East Timor.

Nauru would therefore support a United Nations resolution that would permit the people of West Papua the choice of self-determination.

My Government is concerned that the area comprising the Pacific States does not receive sufficient attention from the United Nations. So often it becomes lumped with Asia and is thereby overwhelmed by Asia. Oceania is a distinct area with unique characteristics and challenges. The Pacific should be recognized by the United Nations on its own as a separate regional group.

I am happy to charge the Assembly with the task of ensuring that, during this session of the Summit and

the General Assembly, the Pacific region become a separate national group.

As small island developing States we are especially noted for our vulnerability, particularly in respect of the fragility of our environment. Together with our brothers and sisters of the Pacific, the people of Nauru are threatened with genocide through global warming and the rise in sea-level. Nauru joins all responsible nations of the world to urge, especially those countries responsible for the present levels of pollution, swift and early implementation of the goals enshrined in the Kyoto Protocol.

Indeed, any cold wind is likely to inflict severe damage, whether that cold wind arose from the rise in sea-levels, pollution of fishing grounds, financial sanctions or, as in Nauru's case, the exhaustion of its only export, phosphate. While tourist posters may conjure up images of paradise in the Pacific islands, the developmental challenges are real and ominous. With high rates of population growth and vulnerable economies there is increasing dependence on external aid and there has been a steady decline in per capita incomes and standards of living resulting in increased poverty.

With substantial external debt, the developing States of the Pacific not only require development assistance but considerable foreign private investment.

Even as small island developing States have attempted to strengthen their slender resources, they occasionally come under attack from the developed economies. The attacks recently from the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) on offshore financial regimes, including Nauru, have not been based so much on money laundering, but rather on the more dubious reason of so-called harmful tax practices. Nauru has been appreciative of the support of the United Nations Offshore Forum which has at least recognized the damage posed by the OECD attacks. If the small island developing States are to be sustainably developed they will need a massive cooperative effort from the developed States and a genuine appreciation for their unique challenges.

One of the developed States which has extended a hand of cooperation has been the Republic of China. As a robust democracy and champion of human rights values, the Republic of China has demonstrated both capacity and enthusiasm to contribute meaningfully to international welfare and progress. Along with a number of other States Members of the United Nations, Nauru therefore supports the inclusion of a supplementary item on the agenda of the General Assembly to examine the international situation of the Republic of China.

The 23 million people of the Republic of China deserve no less than proper international recognition, and as long as they are excluded from the United Nations we cannot consider this body universally representative of the peoples of the world.

In conclusion, I am hopeful that as the United Nations strides into the new century, reform of the Charter will assume greater prominence. We certainly cannot accept that the United Nations continue as it does without allowing wider and deeper involvement of the international community in addressing core global challenges. As leaders, we have a duty to the peoples of the world to ensure that the new century is a safer, more prosperous one than the twentieth century.

In this the two thousandth anniversary of the birth of our Christ, it is my sincere hope that love and understanding amongst the peoples of the world will prevail, for it has been said that the rule of law without love is tyranny.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Ferenc Mádl, President of the Republic of Hungary.

President Mádl: At the threshold of the twenty-first century, we live in a time of serious challenges and great opportunities. Today, there can be no doubt in our minds that a new phenomenon, globalization, is clearly on the march. It is in this context that the United Nations should spare no effort to unfold the hitherto hidden promises of globalization for the benefit of all mankind.

By the same token, it is the common responsibility of the Member States to play their part effectively to counter the disadvantages of this new phenomenon, especially for those of us who have so far been less fortunate. In this regard, the millennium report of the Secretary-General deserves our full attention and deep appreciation. I am more than confident that his major conclusions will find their way to help us fulfil the enormous tasks this Summit faces.

It is often, but rightly, said that global challenges require global responses. In our time, nations can and will only be able to fight poverty, transnational

organized crime, corruption, money-laundering, international terrorism and illicit drug-trafficking if they act in concert. Hungary is ready and willing to play its part to that end.

One of the major concerns of the international community is the issue of the protection of the environment. I believe that the time has come for us all to rededicate ourselves to address environmental issues, including the degradation of the environment, and, at the same time, to exert redoubled efforts to preserve the blessings of nature on our planet for generations to come. The principle of polluter-pays should find its proper place in all relevant international documents. In this regard, Hungary is more than prepared to act regionally, as well as globally, to that end.

For us Hungarians, a nation proud of its history, values represent the basis of policies. The Republic of Hungary also pursues a foreign policy based on values. Consequently, universal values such as respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms — including minority rights — democracy, the rule of law and social justice remain close to our hearts and minds. In this respect, I wish to recall that the United Nations has played a more than commendable role in the international protection of human rights. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights and various relevant conventions helped the dignity and fundamental freedoms of the individual to flourish.

However, as far as human rights are concerned, I believe there is a historical obligation on the part of the United Nations. I hope and pray that international protection for the rights of minorities, including the relevant responsibilities as well as the accountability of the States concerned, will also be drawn up in a legally binding comprehensive instrument. The sooner the international community acts, the better service we render to freedom, democracy and the protection of human rights.

This Summit is a precious and timely opportunity to give new impetus to the reform of the United Nations. Our rapidly changing world needs a renewed United Nations. To better reflect the new political and economic realities, it is also indispensable that the Security Council be enlarged, with new permanent members, to include Germany and Japan among others.

The anniversary of Hungary's 1,000 years of Statehood coincides with the new millennium. I bring the message of celebration of our people to this forum. The values Hungary represents and the objectives we pursue will also make it possible for us to take part in the renewal of the commitment to the noble purposes and principles the United Nations is called to act upon in the twenty-first century. It is in this spirit that my country stands ready to contribute our share to work for a safer and more secure world with the help of the United Nations.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Milan Kučan, President of the Republic of Slovenia.

President Kučan *(spoke in Slovene; English text furnished by the delegation)*: This historic session is an opportunity to reaffirm the positive role of the United Nations and to stress the demand for the respect of human dignity and human individual and collective rights as the fundamental and universal principle of its future actions. In today's world, peace and security, the two basic objectives of the Untied Nations, depend mainly on consistent respect of this principle. This is the key challenge of our future.

Experience tells us that recognizing, promoting and protecting human rights is equally important for peace and security, as are recognizing and protecting the sovereignty of States. As a rule, armed conflicts today are taking place within the borders of sovereign States, and not between them. These internal wars engender violence, genocide and ethnic cleansing, where people's fates depend on their belonging to a particular race, nationality or religion. Regional security and global peace are becoming increasingly dependent on the United Nations capacity to intervene efficiently when States are perpetrating violence against their own citizens.

The international community has already intervened in such conflicts. In most cases, the intervention came too late, the means were inadequate and the results were insufficient. Although these are recognized facts, we still lack systemic and agreed solutions that would ensure timely and efficient results. It is also for these reasons that the reform of the United Nations is imperative. In this context, I would place the principle of State sovereignty, which also includes a State's own responsibility for its citizens and for other States. That principle cannot be an excuse for systematic violence and mass violations of human

rights. It also cannot be the value that would prevent United Nations intervention in such cases.

We were all aware of, and are mutually responsible for, the tragedies that occurred in Rwanda, Cambodia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Srebrenica and Vukovar. Today, those types of tragedies continue to occur in the world. We are also responsible for preventing them from happening again. Clear signs in south-eastern Europe in particular warn that the tragedy could happen again.

I am therefore confident that we shall find the necessary political will to modernize and equip the United Nations for this task. I wish to believe that those who have been entrusted with a seat in the Security Council by virtue of the United Nations Charter — and thus with a special responsibility to safeguard world peace and security — will gather the necessary commitment, spirit and courage to take timely decisions.

The Security Council must act in line with its primary responsibility to preserve peace and security in the world. It must recognize circumstances that demand United Nations authorized action, including the use of force. It must respect the principle of protecting State sovereignty, but not by remaining paralysed when faced with crimes against humanity. The international community, led by the United Nations, has the obligation to act to protect threatened and innocent civilian populations against genocide, ethnic cleansing and systematic mass violence perpetrated by the authorities in their own State. Those who enjoy the right of veto, which represents a special responsibility borne by permanent members of the Security Council, must not hide behind arguments that national internal affairs are at stake and thereby paralyse the Council's work and responsibility.

I support the appeal of Secretary-General Kofi Annan regarding humanitarian intervention, quoted in his report "We the peoples". I expect that, together, we shall strive to make it possible for the international community to be capable of reacting and ensuring that, when the principle of state sovereignty is abused, it does not remain helpless in the face of violence and gross violations of fundamental human rights.

Humanitarian intervention is an active response to a humanitarian crisis and a prolongation of preventive diplomacy, which attempts to solve disputes before they degenerate into conflicts. It requires a new chapter in international law which would be adapted to contemporary understanding of international morality. International humanitarian law is an impressive idea and a requirement of our times. For the time being, its norms are vague, often unknown and frequently deliberately violated. For this reason, it is imperative to elaborate a doctrine for humanitarian intervention based on a modern interpretation of the United Nations Charter and in line with new international relations and norms, which in certain conditions give priority to the protection of human rights. My conviction in this respect is reinforced by my human and political experience of the Balkan tragedy and of Slovenia's participation in peacekeeping missions.

Despite positive achievements, we remain, at the turn of the millennium, still far from achieving our goals in terms of global security and peace, poverty eradication, reducing the enormous disparities in welfare, development and ensuring social and legal security of people. We are far from achieving equality among the different civilizations we belong to and which enrich the material and spiritual lives of humankind. The opportunity has now also come to recognize the universal significance of human rights for global security and peace in the globalized world, with multiple centres of development of human civilization, and to prevent erstwhile confrontations between military and political blocs from being replaced by confrontations between civilizations, cultures and religions, which would have fatal consequences for the future of humankind.

In the future, too, the role of the United Nations will remain irreplaceable. However, its authority and reputation will not be ensured by our words. People's faith in the United Nations will be strengthened by its effectiveness and capacity to implement declared principles, and by its guarantee of peace, security, human dignity and human rights.

Slovenia supports the noble principles and objectives for which we have gathered here. Now, courageous steps are needed. I am confident that, in the spirit of the United Nations, we are capable of making them.

Finally, I am pleased to inform the Assembly that Slovenia will increase its financial contribution to United Nations peace operations in the coming year.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Paul Biya, President of the Republic of Cameroon.

President Biya (*spoke in French*): Cameroon, formerly under United Nations trusteeship, has remained deeply committed to this Organization and to the principles on which it is founded. I am thus extremely pleased to participate in this Millennium Summit, which will be set down in letters of gold in the history of the United Nations.

At the outset, I wish to congratulate the Co-Chairpersons on their elections. We see in this presidency of North and South a harbinger of new times, a sign of the determination of the peoples of the United Nations to approach the twenty-first century together and to build the future together in a spirit of a contract of solidarity.

I am also pleased to commend the action of our Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, whom the people of Cameroon and I had the pleasure of welcoming last May. I congratulate him once again for his enlightening report and the concrete proposals formulated with the current Summit in mind.

The fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations five years ago gave us an early opportunity to engage in collective introspection and in lively consideration of the role and future mission of the United Nations. The final Declaration adopted at that time affirmed the intangibility of the ideals, principles and objectives set out in the Charter and points out the road to follow for the Member States.

By amplifying and extending that Declaration, this Summit, at the threshold between two centuries and two millenniums, invites us to reiterate our active faith in the ideals and objectives of the United Nations by consolidating what should endure and by reforming what needs to be reformed.

Having remained faithful to its ideals and objectives, the United Nations can take pride today in its striking achievements in the promotion of peace, security, respect for human rights, democracy and international economic cooperation. However, many scourges remain: wars and conflicts, massive violations of human rights and the ever widening gap between North and South. New scourges have emerged, such as AIDS, whose seroprevalence in many countries and regions would seem to augur very difficult times to come.

The United Nations, which is facing all these challenges, needs the support of our political will to meet as best it can the legitimate aspirations of the peoples of the United Nations to an equitable share of the fruits of globalization, the advent of a world free from war and poverty, and respect — everywhere and for everyone — for all human rights. These are and remain the legitimate aspirations of the peoples of the United Nations.

It is up to us today to give this Organization the means to make these aspirations a reality. This will necessarily require a just and equitable solution to the debt problem; the strengthening of financial capacities and hence the action of our Organization to ensure enhanced support for subregional organizations; and the priority quest for the prevention of armed conflicts.

In today's world, which tends to relegate human beings to the background, our Organization, if it is to carry out its mission efficiently, must meet the challenge of ethical values. If globalization is not accompanied by a new moral order, if it lacks that extra spirit that constitutes solidarity among nations and peoples, it runs the risk of jeopardizing peace, which is so cherished by our times.

In truth, our world needs ethics. As a set of moral values, ethics constitute an essential expectation on the part of the entire human community. Thanks to ethics, the centrality of human beings in our policies and actions will be enshrined. Indeed, how can we speak of human rights without speaking of the right to development? What do democracy and good governance mean without the ethics of management for the common good? Are not ethics of international solidarity necessary in dealing with the debts of poor countries?

We call for the establishment within the United Nations Secretariat of a committee or of an international ethics monitor, entrusted precisely with the task of promoting fundamental and universal human values between and within nations.

This Summit provides us an opportunity for thoughtful and fruitful reflection about our future. Let us conduct it with optimism, assuming our responsibilities with respect to future generations. This optimism must be based on the rock-hard foundations

of solidarity. On the eve of the twenty-first century, it is up to us to courageously undertake the building of a future free from war and poverty.

For its part, Cameroon will be an active partner in all efforts to guarantee for future generations the benefits of all the values and ideals of the United Nations for a prosperous international community, one with justice, solidarity, harmony and peace.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency The Honourable Kenny Anthony, Prime Minister and Minister for Finance, Economic Affairs and Information of Saint Lucia.

Mr. Anthony (Saint Lucia): We are gathered here today to reaffirm our faith in this Organization, this United Nations. We are gathered here to reconfirm that the purposes and principles of its Charter can safely lead us in the new millennium and fulfil the ageless expectation of a world free of poverty, free of hunger, free of war, free of the dictatorship of the mighty and free for us to enjoy our right to development.

But why should Saint Lucia, an island of 238 square miles, with a population of 155,000 persons, be interested in the will and conscience of the United Nations? Has this body demonstrated in any way that it is a sanctuary for small island developing States? Was it not a promise from the time of its birth to protect the weak, vulnerable and marginalized? Was this not the hope?

So I ask, where is the hope when the World Trade Organization (WTO) has orchestrated the destruction of the economies of some small Caribbean countries, through a ruling that condemns the preferential marketing arrangements for their bananas in Europe as being anti-free trade? How can this be just when these arrangements are a life force of the economies of these countries? How can this be defensible when the Caribbean banana trade represents only 2 per cent of the world banana trade? Where are equity, justice and fairness when other developing countries participate in this attack on our livelihood? Where is the promise when the member countries of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development arrogate to themselves the right to make pronouncements on the efficacy of the international financial services industries of a number of Caribbean countries, when they imperiously seek to determine the nature of our tax regimes by blacklisting those countries as harmful tax havens? Harmful to whom?

In this new age, we are exhorted to be competitive. Yet, whenever we manage to succeed in this endeavour, our developed world shouts "Foul!" and accuses us of being harmful and discriminatory. Therefore, I say that those prophets of the new age of globalization and trade liberalization who trumpet hope in their praises of that new age do so only because they are the ones who enjoy its benefits. But for us in small island States like Saint Lucia, what we hear is the deafening silence of a new order that ignores our special needs. What we experience is the insensitivity and the lack of interest of the mighty as they manipulate the system for their selfish ends. How can we laud the new order? How can we sing its praises?

We are gathered here at a time of supreme paradox in the history of mankind. We meet at a time when the peoples of the world can celebrate the unparalleled progress that humankind has made in the last century. Yet we are gathering at a time when they can also reflect on the unprecedented horrors and contradictions that human civilization has visited upon itself during this epoch. On the one hand, we have a world of unlimited possibility, a world of technological wizardry — all inflated to millennial proportions. On the other hand, there is a digital divide that more than ever extends the gap between the haves and the have-nots into those who know from those who do not.

Today, life expectancy has increased. Educational, nutritional and health standards have improved qualitatively and quantitatively, but we have never, ever, before been stricken by diseases of the same nature and on the same scale as those that presently afflict us.

The world's economy has generated more wealth than at any other time in history, and the prospects for economic prosperity are a lot brighter for a larger percentage of the world's population than ever before. But how can we explain the fact that, according to the conference report on eradicating global poverty, "Parliamentary Action Agenda for the Twenty-first Century", 3 billion people on the planet are living on less than $1 a day and 1 billion subsist on less than $3 dollars a day? Today, the combined wealth of the three richest people in the world is greater than the combined gross domestic product of the 48 poorest countries in

the world. Of the 100 largest economies in the world, 51 are corporations, not countries.

How can we explain the fact that international assistance from wealthy countries to poorer countries has reached its lowest point in 20 years? Where is the collective conscience of humankind? Where is our sense of justice? Where is the brotherhood that binds us together? Where is the hope?

Today, there is an evil stalking our civilization. It is the trafficking and consumption of illicit drugs. Every day one of our young citizens succumbs to these drugs, and I know that we may have lost another genius. Day after day, we persist in pursuing strategies that are clearly not working. We must urgently review those strategies. We must consider and commit ourselves to new approaches to eradicating the scourge of drug trafficking and addiction, otherwise we will lose not only our young people but also our communities, and in time, our Governments.

If the United Nations truly wishes to embrace small States and the developing world and live up to the promise of its birth, it must redefine global governance so as to embody the key principles of inclusiveness, equality, transparency and participatory action. Due deference and recognition must be paid to the special conditions of small developing countries. We must accept the constraints imposed upon them by geography and population size. We must understand their limited internal markets and resource endowment. We must appreciate their low levels of economic diversification. We must realize their high susceptibility to external shocks. We must sympathize with their vulnerability to natural disasters and the effects of environmental change. The United Nations system must take the leading role in the refashioning of multilateral economic governance so as to establish a new regime that is fully legitimate and effective, so that States like Saint Lucia, given their openness, small size, diseconomies of scale and vulnerability, are not further victimized, marginalized and ostracized.

The new millennium presents for us a special historical opportunity, a chance for new beginnings, a window through which desired moral imperatives can infuse the international system with new guiding principles for a different, fairer world order. In the existing plethora of international organizations, the United Nations system must lie at the legislative and normative centre of the world order. The United Nations system is the only universal forum capable of institutionalizing development cooperation. Yet rich and powerful members of this body seek to denature it and strip it of its developmental role and focus. In the context of the global order, the United Nations must become the eternal symbol of the world community for equality in rights and unity of action — an institution where weakness can be ameliorated by justice and fairness. We cannot build a civilization without a conscience.

If there is to be hope that the United Nations can fashion a twenty-first century free of want and free of fear, then we must accept that the pursuit of genuine global peace and security cannot be attained merely through peacekeeping, but rather by addressing the root causes of conflict, poverty, deprivation and discrimination among the world's peoples and nations.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Goh Chok Tong, Prime Minister of the Republic of Singapore.

Mr. Goh (Singapore): Our world is becoming more globalized, yet at the same time more fragmented. Technological advances have brought the world closer, but they have also opened up divides between those who are able to cope with the resultant challenges and those who lack the capacity to do so.

We need to update and strengthen the United Nations to deal with these new problems, as well as the stubborn old ones. We need to do so because no nation can tackle these challenges alone.

I wish to highlight three areas of concern in this regard.

First, the nation-State is being redefined. The power within States is flowing downwards and being localized in provinces and cities. At the same time, State sovereignty is being circumscribed by regional and multilateral organizations. Furthermore, new actors — for example, global corporations, some of which have larger outputs than the gross domestic product of some Member States — and non-governmental organizations, some of which have more international clout than some Governments — are now a prominent and integral part of international life. How do we engage these new power players in a constructive way in the United Nations? What balance can we find between the national role of sovereign

States and the international mandate of multilateral organizations?

Secondly, there has been a growing empowerment of the market in recent years. The financial industry holds more assets than the central banks of the world combined. The value of our national currencies is determined every day by the market rather than by our central banks. Three years ago, dramatic flows of volatile short-term capital destabilized economies and wiped out years of hard work in several Asian countries.

However, opting out of the global market is not a solution. So how can the United Nations help developing countries build the capabilities that will enable them to become part of the new world? How can we help small economies maintain control of their destiny as they liberalize and open up?

Thirdly, globalization and the knowledge revolution will widen the income gap between countries, and hence create new tensions. Our world risks being sharply divided between countries which are able to take advantage of globalization and others which cannot; between countries with high education levels and those which have low literacy rates; and between those which are Internet-savvy and those which do not have access to even the basic computer.

What can the United Nations do to help minimize these new inequalities? I offer one simple idea for a start. The United Nations should provide the leadership within the community of multilateral organizations to help the poorer nations develop the capacity to profit from globalization and the knowledge revolution. The United Nations, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank and several other international organizations were created in a different era to deal with different challenges. They need to be updated. Furthermore, these institutions work separately, and not as a team. Today, however, there is an imperative for them to coordinate their efforts. They need to get together to assess what competencies the poorer nations need to develop in this new era. They should then put in place coordinated programmes to build capacity for globalization and the knowledge revolution. I call upon the Secretary-General to institute regular dialogues among the multilateral organizations to bring about such coordination.

That said, however effective we make the United Nations, it cannot by itself solve the problems of the world. The onus is also on us, acting collectively within our regional groupings, to help increase our own capabilities. Individual countries must also have the national leadership and institutions to achieve stability, growth and equity for their people.

In short, national unity of purpose, cohesive regions, and a multilateral framework under the leadership of a rejuvenated United Nations — these are what will give us hope and confidence for the twenty-first century.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency The Honourable Kenny Anthony, Prime Minister and Minister for Finance, Development, Planning and National Security of Saint Kitts and Nevis.

Mr. Anthony (Saint Kitts and Nevis): I begin my statement by saluting the architects of this Millennium Summit. The Summit is opportune and offers us, as leaders, a chance to build on the progress we have made, while we reflect, in an open and honest way, on the way forward and on the future of the United Nations. The Summit comes at a time of heightened expectations within our own respective countries. This implies that we must engage in a sober and honest examination of problems that confront our peoples and those confronting the Organization. We must therefore use this occasion to re-energize and refocus our foreign policies and national programmes to fit the new global framework and to benefit all the peoples of the world.

I say it categorically: this is not a matter I take lightly. It is a monumental task, one that requires boldness and a commitment of vision to fashion a tomorrow that will not only reflect the dawn of a new day but also the realization of peoples' legitimate hopes and expectations. That is the mandate of my Government, and my Administration is committed to it. In the challenge to raise the standard of living for our people we cannot and must not now relent. The cause of people and the preservation of peace and human security is a work in progress.

It is within that context that my country credits the United Nations as having tremendous relevance in our lives. To us, the Millennium Summit is a call for collective action: collective action to create a more effective United Nations. I have witnessed some successes in the United Nations, but I have also seen the Organization frustrated. Although the General Assembly remains democratic, my Government is still

concerned that while Member States extol the virtues of good governance and democracy within States, they seek at the international level to preserve a system within the Security Council that is undemocratic and inimical to true democracy within the institution.

The reform of the Security Council has defied resolution for too long. Saint Kitts and Nevis encourages democracy within and among States. We celebrated that tradition recently when we welcomed new Member States into our fraternity of nations. In this same spirit, I trust that the United Nations will help to secure the requisite understanding that will soon enable the millions of people on Taiwan to benefit from this international spring of brotherhood and inclusion.

As the Caribbean Community's current representative and spokesman on health-related issues, I am constantly reminded of the real and devastating pandemic of HIV/AIDS. This disease does not recognize national boundaries, and it threatens to undermine future economic and social development and to turn back the clock on progress in many of our nations. I therefore urge the United Nations to continue its important work through the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS). We also look forward to a special session on HIV/AIDS to intensify and further coordinate our approaches at the international level. We have to continue the work to modify behaviours and embrace new attitudes in dealing with the pandemic, which threatens to undermine the economies and social fabric of many nations in Latin America and the Caribbean, the region now said to have the second highest number of cases of infection, after sub-Saharan Africa.

Further, my Government envisages a United Nations better equipped to preserve the progress that we have made in the areas of human security, peace, poverty alleviation, sustainable development and democracy, and to build on them. I invite the United Nations to be more involved in the debate on technology transfer, lending expertise in this endeavour by becoming a more meaningful partner. It should help to identify not only areas for technology transfer, but more important, the transfer of relevant and appropriate technology.

Time and time again, our small island States have swallowed the bitter medicine prescribed to us in order to participate fully in this global economy. But whenever we appear to reach a milestone, the post is arbitrarily moved. We urge the United Nations to become the genuine partner of small island developing States, the genuine partner that we envisaged. We further encourage the realization that a vulnerability index must be factored into any assessment of the needs of small island States. This vulnerability index must also be considered in planning programmes of assistance by the multilateral development, financial and State institutions.

We commend the areas of the Secretary-General's report that speak to human security, and we expect the United Nations to continue to play a proactive role in this endeavour. We urge the United Nations, through the Secretary-General, to impress upon the countries of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development that unilateral "blacklisting" of countries is counter-productive, and that any debate affecting the interests of small developing countries must be raised to the level of multilateral forums where all our voices can be heard. Also, the United Nations has to play a greater role in forging better understanding on trade-related issues.

My people, in voting my Administration into office, placed their hopes, their faith and their future in our hands. I continue to place their hopes in this Organization. We can ill-afford disappointment. The Government and the people of Saint Kitts and Nevis remain committed to the United Nations, and we pray for its continued viability. We truly hope that it will become the mechanism that best translates our dreams into realities. But as we look to the horizon of its future, I truly hope we understand that any future prosperity of our world requires a united international approach.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): I thank the Prime Minister and Minister for Finance, Development, Planning and National Security of Saint Kitts and Nevis for his statement.

The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Giuliano Amato, Prime Minister of the Italian Republic.

Mr. Amato (Italy): Delegates will have noticed that almost all of us are beginning our interventions by saying something like, We are gathered today to reaffirm our commitment to the centrality of the United Nations. Now I think that this is not just rhetoric; it is the right response to an essential need of the world in

the new century, which demands that the United Nations tackle the main challenge as well as the main threat of our future. This challenge and threat is the sharp division between those whose essential rights to security, to life, to dignity, to development, to health and to education are safeguarded and those — the many, the most — who are still excluded from all this.

The credibility of the United Nations will depend on its ability to overcome this divide. There are no prospects for anyone in the next century if we fail to provide fair prospects for everyone.

As the Prime Minister of a country that has heavily invested its energies and resources in the United Nations system, as the head of the Government of a major member of the European Union and of the country that will be chairing the G-8 next year, I must stress that Italy stands ready to fulfil its responsibilities. I will mention two examples: the Italian engagement in United Nations peace operations — we are now the third highest provider of military manpower for such operations — and our recent law on the cancellation of the foreign debt of the poorest countries, a law that goes beyond our multilateral engagements and de facto will increase substantially our financial allocations for development aid.

Precisely because my country has taken concrete steps, and is about to take others, I feel entitled to stress that we need bold and speedy decisions in relation to several priorities for action. To make substantive progress in poverty reduction is the first and main priority. The others are to improve the United Nations capability to handle crises, to make the defence of universal human rights effective and to mobilize the international community against organized international crime.

I will not have the time here to go through all of these priorities. Let me say a few words on some of them.

First of all, regarding progress in poverty reduction: the goal we have set for ourselves, halving poverty by 2015, requires radical efforts. These efforts are especially needed for Africa — a whole continent in danger of falling into a vicious circle of poverty and conflict, which we have to break. But the same could also be said of small insular States and landlocked countries. As we all know, debt cancellation is important, but it is not enough. The industrialized world and the relevant countries need a common strategy. We have to pre-empt any of the current emerging temptations for unilateral interventions that cut off the relevant Governments. There is no action without the Governments of the countries involved. We need a common strategy for this.

The less-advanced countries can and should develop political and economic reforms — actual steps and uses of the few resources they have for poverty-reduction programmes. The more advanced countries can and should develop a better mix of policies, blending measures directed at debt reduction. We also have to address the problems of middle-income nations, because poverty is an increasing issue in middle-income nations as well. And we also need to address the issues of open markets and fresh investment in key sectors, beginning with education and health.

I must insist on two points that Italy will put at the forefront of its positions at the forthcoming Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries and at the meeting on financing for development, and which I will propose again at the Genoa Summit of the G-8 next year. The importance of opening our markets by abolishing quotas and tariffs for the least developed countries — any effort is pointless if we keep quotas and tariffs vis-à-vis these countries, of allocating fresh resources to education, and of extending access to the new information technologies and to the fight against disease. My country intends to contribute directly to the Health InterNetwork suggested by the Secretary-General in his report to the Assembly.

I do not have time to go into United Nations capabilities to handle crises. I limit myself to saying that on this point I agree with the essence of the conclusion of the Brahimi report, and that Italy intends, among other initiatives, to participate in the training of the civilian and police personnel for United Nations missions.

Finally, let me say that responsibility and priority are the key words. They require the existence of multilateral institutions that are strong and perceived as legitimate. This is a crucial issue: legitimacy of the decisions that are taken by groups, institutions and any other body on the international scene. Legitimacy means the democratization of decision-making processes in today's world. Even sound policies, even

sound measures can be rejected if the countries called upon to implement them perceive such implementation as an imposition upon them. That is why it is so difficult to find and to pursue common strategies around the world.

This is the crucial issue we have to tackle in the future and that we have to tackle when revising the functioning and the structure of the different bodies of the United Nations to improve their efficiency, their democratic legitimacy and power of decision. These are also the criteria that must inspire a comprehensive reform of the Security Council.

I am not sure that the words we are pronouncing today, as most of us are so encouragingly meeting, will remain after this Millennium Summit. I hope that our commitments will remain and will inspire our future actions. I rely on the Secretary-General's promise to transform our commitments today and of these past few days into a common programme of action. This is what we all have to implement in this regard.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Basdeo Panday, Prime Minister of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago.

Mr. Panday (Trinidad and Tobago): That we are meeting at this level, in these unprecedented numbers, is an unmistakable manifestation of our belief in the capacity of the United Nations to be the effective catalyst for peace and progress, for freedom and justice, for inclusiveness and dignity for and among nations and for all peoples of the world.

The interests of the people of the world whom we are assembled here to represent will undoubtedly be advanced by the fuller understanding and the deeper empathy with the needs and concerns of member nations — large and small, rich and poor — that this Millennium Summit will engender. For this alone, this Summit is of significant value to the world.

We all face common challenges and common threats: joblessness and poverty, the globalization of narco-trafficking, the global HIV/AIDS pandemic, the continuing development and retention of nuclear weaponry, the proliferation of small arms, the degradation of the environment and, to mankind's eternal shame, racism, racial intolerance and religious intolerance.

I make bold to say that my own country, the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, has responded to a number of these challenges with a vigour and effectiveness quite disproportionate to our small size and our small population of 1.3 million people. We have, for example, introduced — and we are implementing — a regime of anti-money laundering measures that are close to the toughest and most comprehensive to be found in any jurisdiction of the world. This includes provision for seizure of ill-gotten wealth and assets which cannot be rationally explained.

In taking the fight to the narco-traffickers, we have forged strong and productive alliances with the United States of America, with Caribbean nations and with other countries.

We have confronted poverty with such purposefulness that the current United Nations Development Programme's Human Development Report ranks Trinidad and Tobago one of the five countries that have been most successful in overcoming severe poverty among all developing nations of the world.

By another measure Trinidad and Tobago has been notably successful in managing diversity through the strong commitment and adherence to the principle and practice of true inclusion in all areas of public life in our country. Indeed, out of our great diversity have come the essential spirit of our people, our celebration of life.

Those essences and our spirit were present here in New York, in the street carnival on Labour Day, on Monday. Those essences and that spirit were also celebrated last week in Europe's largest street festival, the Notting Hill Carnival.

You see it, too, whenever you hear the music of the steel bands anywhere in the world. Notwithstanding our modest achievements, small and developing countries such as Trinidad and Tobago and our sister Caribbean States face additional challenges and threats, among them, the danger of marginalization in the now evident realities of globalization and technological advance.

We also face the paradox that while our small economies continue to be genuinely vulnerable to external factors, while our fragile ecosystems are imperilled by developments not of our making, our graduation to per capita middle-income status

effectively denies us adequate consideration for the developmental support we so urgently need.

Our small economies are confronted by a changing trade environment in which the principle of special and differential treatment is being phased out. The international response that can enable us to develop the necessary capacity to exploit the opportunities presented by globalization has been decidedly less than adequate.

The 37 small island developing States, members of the United Nations, have special developmental needs which this Summit and the United Nations must not overlook. Over the years, Caribbean Community States have petitioned the international community for recognition of the Caribbean as a special area for sustainable development.

We have also sought support for the protection of the Caribbean Sea as an environmental treasure for the world. Now, we recognize the threat of new marginalization by the new disparities that come with the digital divide. On this score, we urge the United Nations to ensure equitable coordination in the field of science and technology, particularly information technology.

Next year the United Nations will host a high level forum on financing for development. The World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the World Trade Organization will take part in that conference. We make an early petition for the forum to produce an action plan that will include a framework for financial crisis prevention and crisis resolution based on partnership between public and private sectors.

We also make an early petition for a resolution from the financing development forum to give borrowing countries a substantial role in determining economic and social development objectives.

I take this opportunity to place on record the gratitude of Trinidad and Tobago for the pivotal role played by the United Nations in addressing all the social issues facing humanity. We record our appreciation for the United Nations positive response when Trinidad and Tobago moved to revive the concept of the establishment of a permanent International Criminal Court. It is our firm conviction that the crime of illicit drug trafficking should be included in the Court's jurisdiction. And after listening this morning to the President of Ghana, Jerry Rawlings, I add the crime of corruption.

While we examine the global concerns on our Summit agenda, most of us are preoccupied with the challenges with which we must come to terms in our own communities and our own countries. We must provide shelter, nutrition, health services, education and training, and security for our people, and we must, through our policies, deliver jobs. We must also directly provide assistance to those of our citizens who are still trapped in poverty.

It is our sincere hope that this Millennium Summit will in some small measure persuade the decision makers of the world, in the private sector and in the international agencies, that such human concerns deserve to be an important factor in all future planning.

May the blessings that we ask of God find full expression in the prosperity of all peoples of the world and in peace among all peoples of all nations.

The Co-Chairperson (Namibia): Before I give the floor to the next speaker, I appeal for respect for the limit on the length of statements. Members are aware that there are still 12 speakers remaining on the list of speakers for this meeting. Since we must exhaust the list for each meeting, I appeal to participants in the Millennium Summit to respect the five minute speaking time allotted to each speaker. This will allow us to hear all the speakers on the list before we adjourn for lunch this afternoon.

The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Marc Forné Molné, Prime Minister of the Principality of Andorra.

Mr. Molné (Andorra) (*spoke in Catalan*) (English text provided by the delegation): We are meeting today in New York, at the seat of the United Nations, to celebrate 2,000 years of our calendar. One thousand years ago the roads had become unsafe, the philosophies of the ancients had been put to one side to await the Renaissance and human beings eked out an existence in fear and poverty in a divided and unsafe Europe.

Now, in the year 2000, science has freed us from many diseases and some superstitions. The bloody wars of the twentieth century and the atomic age have made us aware of our immense and brutal capacity for self-destruction. The rationalism and liberalism of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and the failure of

authoritarian and totalitarian models have led to the advance of modern democracy, which is indisputably the best system of government for human communities.

One hundred and eighty-nine sovereign nations are meeting under the auspices of the United Nations in a spirit of planetary solidarity at a time of globalization and instant communication. Mankind has never been closer to the promised land, but at the same time we have never been so aware of the dangers hindering us from reaching it.

The peace of nations cannot be built, as in the year 0, on the supremacy of an empire, whether political or economic. The Governments of the world must lead globalization to areas of true cooperation between north and south, between large and small, because political globalization cannot come into being at the cost of small countries. Small human communities such as the Principality of Andorra, the peaceful heirs of a long history of democracy, must be able to maintain their presence without losing their identity. If political globalization does not include the small States, we shall be less in all possible meanings of the word.

The year 2000 should be remembered as the year of courage and not as the year of fear, like the year 1000. The greatest Assembly in the history of the rulers of the earth is to be found in this Hall. Today we know where good and evil lie. The San Francisco Charter and the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights leave no room for doubt.

In the coming years we must have the courage to speak out frankly. We must have the courage to condemn dictatorships, even if they have been set up in countries which are important for our economy. We must have the courage to opt jointly for policies of solidarity rather than reasons of State. This must be the year of ethics and courage and the beginning of a century of valour.

The attendance of high representatives at international conferences must be visible and continuous. I am sorry to have to regret the lack of interest aroused by the conference on social development that began in Geneva on the 26 June this year, unlike the 1995 Copenhagen summit, where nearly all of us were in the official photograph.

Andorra gives its full support to the millennium report (A/54/2000) of the Secretary-General, Kofi Annan. There must be fair globalization, reduction of the abject poverty which grinds down half of mankind and a safer world which acts more to prevent conflicts than to react to them. There must be much less military expenditure and much more medical research into AIDS, which is killing thousands in Africa and all over the world.

Mr. Gurirab (Namibia) took the Chair.

We also want more awareness and defence of the natural environment. But, although we in the small States are making great efforts to respect nature to the maximum, we shall always feel that the big States have to do the real work, and the fact is that they are not doing it. To the contrary, they are refusing to sign protocols and refusing to limit the unsustainable growth which characterizes those States, and in this manner, they are changing the climate of the whole world. It is obvious that we are all to blame in some measure when we follow blindly along the road of industrial consumption. At this summit these questions, which will condition life in the century we are beginning, must be discussed.

We have taken note of the invitation of the Secretary-General in his report, and we are taking advantage of this Summit meeting to sign the two Optional Protocols to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, on the involvement of children in armed conflict and on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography.

We have also given our support to the initiative of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mrs. Mary Robinson, with regard to the declaration "Tolerance and diversity: a vision for the 21st century", because our land, Andorra, has much to say about questions of diversity and tolerance. We have lived through the wars of our neighbours and other wars in Europe. Refugees have always found help and peace with us. In the second half of the twentieth century, Andorra was host to immigrants, which multiplied its population by a factor of more than eight. All of us who live there try to make tolerance and respect for diversity more than mere words. We must learn how to welcome the diversity of human beings and of nations and, at the same time, establish global values about what is or is not legitimate. This is the great challenge for the future of humankind: managing to respect the cultural diversity of all while refusing to accept excuses, based

on culture or religion, for failing to apply all the norms of democracy and human rights.

The Acting Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Mikuláš Dzurinda, Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic.

Mr. Dzurinda (Slovakia): At the dawn of a new millennium, the human race is going through fundamental changes, within a global context, that are bound to have a significant impact on the future of humanity in the twenty-first century in all walks of life. Apart from triggering the process of democratization, the end of the cold war and the demise of the bipolar world brought forth new opportunities for many countries to enhance their international cooperation and, in some cases, achieve rapprochement. At the same time, however, it raised new challenges for the current generation and, in some ways, for the very construction of multilateralism, based on the United Nations Charter.

The end of this century has been marked by an escalation of negative phenomena, including intra-State conflicts, accompanied by humanitarian crises of tragic dimensions; gross violations of human rights; globalization, which, apart from its economic benefits, has had a number of negative social consequences, such as the widening gap between the rich and the poor; new threats to the environment; organized crime; drugs; disease; the proliferation of illegal weapons; and a soaring number of refugees throughout the globe.

Having come face to face with these challenges, the United Nations has justified its mission. The Slovak Republic is convinced that the United Nations plays an irreplaceable role in tackling a whole range of global issues, the solution of which by individual Member States on an individual or regional basis has proved to be practically impossible. The Slovak Republic, like other States Members of the United Nations, is aware of the necessity for the United Nations to undertake overall reform. This necessity has become particularly apparent in the light of the recent conflicts in the Balkans and the protracted conflicts in Africa, such as those in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Sierra Leone.

In this context, I wish to emphasize that United Nations reform cannot be complete without the reform of the Security Council, as that is the key body of the United Nations responsible for preserving international peace and security. An increase in the number of Security Council members and an improvement in the efficiency of its decision-making process and the transparency of its activities would increase the authority, representative character, credibility and efficiency of the Security Council in the future.

Our planet is a shared home for all of mankind. That is why the efficient resolution of global issues requires the active involvement of civil society and the private sector. In this context, the Slovak Republic supports the initiative of the United Nations Secretary-General with regard to the private sector, as expressed in his appeal for the adoption of the Global Compact of Shared Values and Principles in the area of human rights, labour and employment and the environment.

Slovakia also supports the proposals put forward by the United Nations Secretary-General with regard to the fields of social development, the standard of living, health care and the eradication of poverty.

The experience gained by the Slovak Republic from its involvement in United Nations peacekeeping missions bears witness to the potential of the small- and medium-sized countries for active participation in ensuring peace and stability worldwide.

Standing on the threshold of the new century, the international community must focus its endeavours on ensuring full respect for international law and, in particular, human rights, violations of which have recently been grave and numerous. Hence, Slovakia fully supports the expedient constitution of an International Criminal Court and subscribes to the Secretary-General's appeal to put an end to the culture of impunity.

Global developments lead us to reiterate the universal validity of the need to respect the human rights and personal freedoms of individuals as basic prerequisites for the freedom of nations and for their dynamic social and economic development and harmonious coexistence worldwide. The Slovak Republic is firmly determined to take an active part in defending and ensuring that respect.

The peace, security, prosperity and development of humanity in the forthcoming century will test our ability to combine traditional concepts, derived from the idea of the sovereignty of States, as the basic elements of international law, with new principles that are based on global respect for fundamental human

rights and on the accountability of individual States to the international community for the breaches of such rights. These new ideas and principles should spark debates among nations and, ultimately, result in a broad-based agreement within the international community, as was the case 55 years ago when the United Nations Charter was adopted.

This Organization faces many challenges. Allow me to express my conviction that, when the process of internal reforms has been accomplished, the United Nations will be able to react to each and every one of these challenges with the utmost tact and efficiency.

The Acting Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Costas Simitis, Prime Minister of the Hellenic Republic.

Mr. Simitis (Greece): The twentieth century has bequeathed to us admirable achievements in almost all fields of human activity. In 100 years, the world has achieved unprecedented results in the sciences, technology and communication. It has developed and refined ideas and practices on social cohesion, democratic governance, the protection of human dignity and the application of the rules of law, transcending national barriers and mentalities. The United Nations has played its part in assisting the transformation of the international community into a living organism, partaking of the same values and principles. The United Nations has greatly contributed to the maintenance of international peace and security and the creation of new equilibriums in relations between States, as well as to the redistribution of wealth between rich and poor countries.

Yet, neither the United Nations, nor the international community as a whole have succeeded in eradicating the scourges, which from time immemorial have cast shadows on the prosperity of humanity. We are still witnessing, in alarming dimensions, poverty and malnutrition, social exclusion, deadly diseases, as well as incessant waves of international and internal conflicts of extreme violence. At the same time, the very beneficial human achievements, of which we are all proud, have brought with them negative consequences, hindering the environment, destroying the quality of human life, threatening sometimes the very basis upon which we have built international and internal solidarity and respect for the fundamental rules of humanity.

Our task, therefore, must be to find new avenues through which we will control and gradually eradicate the causes of the scourges that torment all our lives. This task requires co-operation — cooperation at all levels — but mainly and, most importantly, at the global level because it would otherwise be difficult, if not impossible, to have positive results in our world of close interdependence. We strongly believe that the United Nations has a serious role to play in this respect. Its experience, its past achievements in all these fields, its nature as the only political international organization with universal participation, coupled with its specialized organs and agencies, are solid material upon which we may rely in our fight against the problems of our world. But, it goes without saying, that in order for the United Nations system to effectively cope with this heavy burden, it must be duly empowered both institutionally and materially. Greece believes that it is necessary to strengthen the position and the role of the main organs of the United Nations.

The Security Council, in particular, needs comprehensive reform in order to become more representative and far more effective. Its long history and involvement in international affairs has demonstrated that its inability to solve problems of magnitude is due both to its structural deficiencies, which date back to its institutional inception, as well as to the unwillingness of Member States to give it room to become effectively involved in matters where State sovereignty and vital interests are considered to override international concerns.

We have in the last few days heard about many problems that have remained unsolved for years even though the United Nations has taken relevant decisions. The Cyprus problem is an example. We should not allow this situation to continue any longer.

Now that we are all aware of the dangers surrounding us, as well as of the United Nations potential to deal with them properly, it would be unimaginable and unreasonable for us to waste such a comprehensive system and not to make full use of its precious services to secure peace and amicable relations and to fight all deficiencies in the world order to which we have just referred.

The United Nations can be an effective tool to solve our problems — the problems of the new world. It has the multilateral framework. We can and should, all of us, make full use of it.

The Acting Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Highness Sheikh Hamad Bin Mohammad Al-Sharqi, Member of the Supreme Council, Ruler of the Emirate of Al-Fujairah of the United Arab Emirates.

His Highness Sheikh Hamad Bin Mohammad Al-Sharqi (United Arab Emirates) (*spoke in Arabic*): On behalf of His Highness Sheikh Zayid Bin Sultan Al-Nahayan, President of the State of the United Arab Emirates, I have the honour to convey his greetings and regards to the President of the Republic of Namibia and the President of Finland for co-chairing this historic Summit.

The United Arab Emirates looks to this Millennium Summit with high hopes of achieving justice and equality among all the peoples of the world and of reinforcing the bonds of joint cooperation in dealing with injustice, violence, terrorism, illiteracy, organized crime, the elimination of poverty and contagious diseases and a horde of other contemporary international problems.

While we emphasize our true desire to seriously work with all the nations and peoples of the world in order to achieve the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and preserve peace, security and stability in our region and in the world at large, we call for respect for the principles of renunciation of violence, non-use of force and the resolution of disputes through dialogue and by peaceful means.

Hence, the United Arab Emirates persists in its endeavours to find a just solution to the dispute with the Islamic Republic of Iran arising from Iran's occupation in 1971 of the three islands that belong to the United Arab Emirates — Greater Tunb, Lesser Tunb and Abu Musa. We call upon Iran to respond to our declared initiative to peacefully resolve this dispute in accordance with the principles and rules of international law, either through direct negotiations or by resorting to the International Court of Justice. We are confident that such a step would strengthen and cement the bilateral and collective relations between the States of the region, and indeed contribute to consolidating the foundations of regional and international peace, security and stability.

In this context also, we call upon the international community, including Iraq, to exert further political and diplomatic efforts to alleviate the human suffering of the fraternal Iraqi people. In doing so we underline the need for the Iraqi Government to complete its implementation of the relevant Security Council resolutions, particularly regarding prisoners of war and other detainees who are citizens of the sisterly State of Kuwait and of other countries, and the restitution of Kuwaiti property.

Achieving a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East requires a commitment on the part of the Israeli Government to implement the relevant United Nations resolutions, particularly Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973). Those resolutions call for ending the illegal Israeli occupation of Palestinian land and other occupied Arab territories, particularly Al-Quds al-Sharif and the Syrian Golan; the return of Palestinian refugees to their homeland; and the legitimate right of the Palestinian people to establish their own independent State, with Jerusalem as its capital.

In welcoming the efforts made by the United States of America and other countries to arrive at a just, equitable and comprehensive resolution of the Palestine issue, we call for those efforts to be sustained in order to bring about the resumption of negotiations on the Syrian track, so that the countries and the peoples of the region may enjoy security, stability and prosperity. Also in this regard, we would like to express our congratulations to fraternal Lebanon on regaining its territories, and to wish it continued prosperity and progress.

Despite the multidimensional economic growth that has characterized developments in international economic relations, we are concerned about problems and challenges that developing countries have to endure, particularly at a time when global events have proved that international economic growth and stability require the participation of developing and developed countries alike. Globalization represents both a phenomenon and an important event in international relations. Accordingly, it must be utilized to serve the common interests and objectives of humanity.

The United Nations is still the most appropriate international forum for dealing with contemporary regional and international issues such as limiting the proliferation of proscribed weapons, cases of foreign occupation, poverty and debt, environmental pollution and similar issues. Therefore, we call for the reform of the Organization, especially the General Assembly and

the Security Council, in order to enable them to deal effectively with those challenges and phenomena.

In conclusion, we trust that the Millennium Summit will mark the start of a new era in international relations in which tolerance, peaceful coexistence, stability and respect for international law prevail and lead to a better life for all humankind.

The Acting Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Serene Highness Crown Prince Albert, Crown Prince of the Principality of Monaco.

Crown Prince Albert (Monaco) (*spoke in French*): The time of dreams and utopias has been followed by a more rigorous one, that of commercial realities. Political power has often found it difficult to prevail in the face of the growing influence of the globalized economy. The rules of the great planetary game are changing. This is a fact, not merely an opinion.

Peoples are confused. Many States are wounded and in disarray. Even the most powerful nations are in doubt. They see, not without bitterness, that they can no longer build history by themselves. Because scientific and technological progress have been so tremendous, and because the political, economic and social changes flowing from that progress are so rapid and deep, the millennium to come is an unknown. The San Francisco Charter is the only remaining immutable point of reference.

The Charter expresses the wisdom of nations, the rejection of war and violence in all its forms, and the need for collective security on the basis of respect for the independence, dignity and sovereignty of States, including the smallest among them. It also expresses the firm resolve to cooperate actively for the promotion of human rights and economic and social development. Our Organization must necessarily adapt in order to be able to assume its mandate. It can do so, and it is doing so at its own pace. That pace is imposed upon it by the complexity of its institutions and the often conflicting interests of its Members.

In terms of international security, the Organization expresses itself clearly. Today, it is better able to identify the causes of disputes and share the responsibility for their management. It must have more effective means to prevent those disputes, and to that end it should no doubt resort more frequently to carrying out research on peace and on the causes of conflict and violence. It must also more effectively combat threats other than military ones: terrorism; drug trafficking; trafficking in human beings, including the weakest among them, children; and the misdeeds resulting from funds of criminal origin.

It is no doubt in the field of disarmament that progress runs the risk of being slowest. Only the trust that our Organization can maintain among its Members will guarantee success in this area, so vital to the future.

In terms of human rights and humanitarian law, the United Nations has gained a set of remarkable instruments whose implementation will no doubt continue, albeit too slowly. It will be necessary for the Organization to ensure the strengthening and smooth functioning of bodies entrusted with their promotion in order to ensure the well-being and development of all human beings, in the present and in the future, regardless of their place of birth or residence. The Organization should also examine carefully how the new economic and financial powers are behaving with regard to human rights, in particular as concerns economic, social and cultural rights.

In terms of development, the metamorphosis of the Organization is complete. It constantly recalls that economic progress must also be social progress and that it must be in the service of mankind as a whole. Its approach is a pragmatic one, and its action is increasingly concrete. It will also be essential for our Organization to endeavour, within the context of the irreversible process of globalization, to respect cultural and linguistic diversity, through which peoples have nourished their roots and built their identities.

In terms of the environment, the Organization has been able to single out the true priorities and to warn people about the most serious threats to nature, which sometimes cannot be corrected. Over the past few years, the Organization has been able to develop ecological standards, which we must apply diligently and quickly.

Finally, today our Organization knows how to pursue its legitimate aspirations with regard to justice. New paths are opening up, paths of hope. Our Organization must deepen those channels in order to respond as quickly as possible to peoples' demands and sensitivities in this area. We have entrusted the Organization with the drafting and promotion of

standards and principles that are our most valuable heritage. It is our duty to enable the United Nations to continue to improve in carrying out these lofty missions.

We heads of State and Government, the representatives of billions of men and women, must thank the United Nations for its efforts, support it and, in particular, encourage it. The political Declaration we will adopt, to which the Principality of Monaco adheres fully, will guide the Organization's first steps in the dawn of the next millennium. We need more than ever a universal Organization, one that is active and responsible and guided by the most urgent needs of peoples, especially of the most disadvantaged. We hope for an Organization that will be a moral reference point for conducting the affairs of the world with integrity.

The Principality of Monaco, one of the smallest of its Members in size and population, bears proof, through its age-old history, that military and economic power is not sufficient to ensure the endurance of States. Their survival and development and the happiness of their people can, we believe, be firmly founded only in peaceful and harmonious relations among nations that are themselves inspired by equity and justice, as well as by respect for international law and universal ethics.

In opening itself more broadly to civil society; in cooperating more closely with economic agents; in involving public and private institutions on a more regular basis in its initiatives; and in radically exploiting the means of mass communication, including digital, the United Nations is striving to listen attentively to the peoples and, as its Charter calls on it to do, to act more effectively on their behalf. We welcome this and congratulate the Organization on it. The remarkable report issued by its Secretary-General further encourages us to do so and incites us to pay a tribute to the 50,000 international civil servants for their admirable devotion and selflessness — sometimes, as yesterday, at the peril of their lives.

We sincerely hope that our Organization will be able to pursue its noble mandates with greater authority. We reaffirm our trust in it, and do so without reservation and in the strength of conviction.

The Acting Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Kuwait.

Sheikh Al-Sabah (Kuwait) (*spoke in Arabic*): I wish to convey the greetings of His Highness, the Amir of the State of Kuwait, Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, who wishes this Summit every success. I have the honour to read out his statement before the Assembly:

> "The Prophet's message was to guide mankind along the righteous paths, showing the way to justice, security and peace. Its ultimate purpose is to help mankind to live a safe, secure and dignified life.
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> "On the other hand, Allah bestowed on humanity the great trust of being endowed with a mind, the architect of all of our personal and worldly affairs. Thus, the human race was entrusted with the stewardship of all aspects of life on Earth, its water resources and outer space. Inasmuch as human beings are entrusted with the responsibility to conserve nature, they are required to harness all natural resources to their benefit. The rational and appropriate use of these resources must be exercised with a view to avoiding environmental damage and degradation.
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> "In the final analysis, however, humanity is a confusion of conflicting good and evil tendencies. Surreptitiously, the evil elements may gain mastery of an individual, turning him or her into what may appear to be a tool of chaos and destruction; similarly, a person may fall prey to selfishness and greed to the point at which he or she may be lured into denying others access to the bounty of the universe.
>
> "Some of us may occasionally feel that humanity is paying inadequate attention to the future of this planet, in view of the existing stockpiles of the implements of death and destruction and the relentless efforts made to develop and enlarge those arsenals of lethal and highly sophisticated death machines and materiel. In fact, there is an even more dangerous threat to human life: those elements who act in ways that are harmful and demeaning to the well-being and dignity of their fellow human beings. Looking around us, we can see in too many parts of the world people who incite sedition, hatred, discrimination, selfishness and chauvinism.

"These attitudes may in the end prove more destructive than lethal weaponry. In retrospect, we find that human societies have suffered in the past and continue to endure tragedies and massacres, even as we speak, as a result of those attitudes, which lead to the subjugation of too many people to repression and deprivation. The harmful exploitation and mismanagement of natural resources that sometimes occur through tyranny and narrow self-interest expose vast numbers of people to the pressures and anguish of poverty and destitution while, at the same time, other segments of human society enjoy comfortable lives free from epidemics, illiteracy and want.

"These preoccupations have dogged us for decades. Towards the end of the last century, we had hoped that humanity would at least have succeeded in alleviating their impact even if it was largely unable to resolve them. Alas, however, reality has defeated our aspirations. Indeed, in some respects, the situation is quite depressing, as we see these problems being exacerbated in terms of intensity, scope and human losses. This melancholy picture mars the celebration of our passage into the twenty-first century. It also casts a long, gloomy shadow over what would perhaps seem the greater part of the new century.

"Nevertheless, we remain hopeful that the new century will hold the promise of humanity's raising itself above those pernicious phenomena. It is also our hope that, in the new century, humanity will demonstrate improved rationality in the interests of mutual benefit and more civility in its interactions. We hope that humanity will collectively focus more on improving living conditions across the globe and on addressing its problems more effectively with a view to ensuring the universal safety and freedom from fear of all peoples. The conservation and improvement of our human environment should always be at the heart of our endeavours if we are to ensure that this planet remains healthy and hospitable to our future generations.

"Our work today is characterized by globalization, colossal economic blocs and fast-advancing technology. It is a world that is more aware of and sensitive to human suffering wherever it occurs. It is also a world that has become more responsive and willing to reach out with relief and humanitarian assistance across national and regional borders. Nevertheless, we continue to be challenged by intense racial and sectarian violence, the persistent outbreak of diseases and natural disasters, and an entire array of problems, as the Secretary-General has rightly outlined in his report.

"If we are to achieve better living conditions in the new century, those challenges must be faced squarely by drawing on human resolve, ingenuity and innovation. The bottom line in our common battle is the need to mount joint and well-coordinated international efforts to stem the tide of those problems, or at least to contain them or mitigate their impact. This may require some new modalities for international contributions and burden-sharing within the framework of thoughtful and agreed platforms and plans of actions. In our view, such moves would certainly help to promote understanding among peoples and civilizations and further consolidate world peace and security.

"Similarly, the international community, represented by the United Nations, should spare no effort in its collective endeavour to reject any attempt to resolve differences among nations outside the parameters of the purposes and principles of the United Nations and the overarching concepts of peace. The United Nations system must remain the primary and final resort for the resolution of international disputes and its rulings must be respected and upheld by all its Members.

"In the same spirit, however, we must now reaffirm our commitment at the individual level to rejecting any form of human slavery or denial of human rights, regardless of the excuses and circumstances cited to justify them by any political system or regime, even if that violation was committed by the Government of the individual's own homeland.

"In this context, we cannot tolerate the abduction of innocent hostages by a totalitarian regime that continues to hold them as political bargaining chips. The families of those detainees continue to anguish over the plight of their loved

ones, while the hostages themselves languish in pain. The sense of loss and frustration runs deep among those families who continue to pin their hopes on the international community to hold that regime accountable and to compel it to release those innocent victims and to account for their whereabouts.

"Every effort should be made to ensure that the twenty-first century will be free of war criminals and perpetrators of massacres, including those who plan for and participate in such crimes against humanity. We fervently hope that the new century, which is three months away, will prove to be free of wars, epidemics, greed and conflicts. Let us hope that we can channel our energy and resources into preserving our home, the planet Earth, which has suffered immense damage in the course of the past century.

"Can we close ranks and work together in unison to meet this universal challenge? Can we truly pool our efforts to make the world a more friendly environment for our children?

"There is no doubt in my mind that many world leaders share the same desire. After all, this is the desire of just about every human being. So, let us work to translate it into a tangible reality."

The Acting Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Tarik Aziz, Deputy Prime Minister of Iraq.

Mr. Aziz (Iraq) (*spoke in Arabic*): We would like to express our best wishes to the peoples of the United Nations in the twenty-first century, which we hope will be a century of peace, justice and progress for all.

It is true that this occasion is an opportunity for contemplation. To be meaningful, this contemplation should be sincere. Hence, let me present our vision and concerns sincerely and frankly.

When we discuss the role of the United Nations in the twenty-first century, we all agree on the importance attached to the Organization's success in facing up to future challenges and other longstanding challenges that continue to elude us. To be effective in meeting such challenges, the United Nations should indeed reflect the will of all its peoples.

The United Nations Charter was drafted on this basis. Furthermore, its provisions have stipulated that the interest sought should be the common and collective interest. However, the most important fact of the past era was that the ability to properly apply the provisions of the United Nations Charter was not often possible, due to the influences of the powerful States that dominated the making of international resolutions for their own interests. This situation was aggravated during the 1990s as a result of United States hegemony and domination over the international Organization for the benefit of its imperialist objectives. Thus, the work of the United Nations in the twenty-first century should be directed in the first place towards resuming the proper application of the Charter and the prevention of hegemony over United Nations resolutions and positions.

The essential step in this move would be to reform the decision-making process in the United Nations, particularly the Security Council, so that it could really reflect the will of all Member States. There is no guarantee, of course, for the proper application of the United Nations Charter unless all States, both large and small, adhere to the principles of the Charter, particularly the principle of equal sovereignty of States, without which the United Nations in the twenty-first century would be an extension of the status quo.

We disagree with the optimistic picture of globalization drawn up in the Secretary-General's report. We do not think that globalization will bring about benefits for all. What we have seen so far is that the benefits of globalization are concentrated in a few States.

The essence of globalization is to achieve economic hegemony by the few rich States, the United States of America in particular, as well as overwhelming dominance by Western consumer culture, thus threatening the cultures of other peoples, their different lifestyles and their system of spiritual values.

Furthermore, we view with considerable scepticism the invitation to transnational corporations and non-governmental organizations to participate in the work of the United Nations, and we stress the need for studying in depth the criteria for such partnership, its corresponding obligations and preventing its having an adverse impact on the principles of international organizations as set forth in the Charter, such as equal sovereignty among States and non-interference.

Ironically, the United Nations, whose Charter provides for the protection of human rights and human dignity, accepts being a tool for violating such fundamental human rights, through the comprehensive and unrestricted use of the sanctions system, notwithstanding the suffering those sanctions inflict upon the targeted peoples.

In the case of Iraq, the Iraqi victims of these unjust and unrestricted sanctions have amounted to more than a million children, women and elderly people during the past 10 years. Therefore, it is not enough to admit that sanctions are an ineffective tool leading to counterproductive results, and it is not enough to dubiously call for directing them in a better way; rather, the use of these sanctions should be restricted, and they should not trespass upon the scope of the United Nations Charter. Also, they should not be held hostage, as in the case of Iraq, to the will of the United States of America, which hijacked the resolution on the lifting of sanctions on Iraq from the Security Council to exploit it in the service of its own interests and hostile policies.

The United Nations cannot escape its moral responsibility for the consequences of the application of sanctions. This responsibility starts once the sanctions are imposed, rather than after their catastrophic consequences have unfolded.

We view with caution and scepticism the so-called concept of humanitarian intervention, since this call may be used — and, in fact, has been used — to interfere in the internal affairs of States by other States, particularly the dominating Power, the United States of America. We disagree with the assumption that the principles of sovereignty and humanitarian international law are at variance and that we have to choose one of them.

As regards the main challenges the world faces in the twenty-first century, particularly freedom from poverty and securing an ecologically safe future for coming generations, we believe that success in meeting these challenges depends on the cooperation of all States. In this context, the rich industrial countries have to bear the biggest brunt of this confrontation due to their economic capabilities, as well as in view of their responsibility for creating and maintaining these challenges.

The Acting Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Win Aung, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Myanmar.

Mr. Aung (Myanmar): The world that we live in today is different from that of the founders of the United Nations. In the intervening half century, the world has witnessed momentous changes — some for the better, some for the worse.

We have made huge strides in the field of technology. The world population has surpassed the 6 billion mark. The world has the ability to feed the teeming billions. However, people living in dire poverty and millions dying of hunger are common phenomena.

As we enter the new millennium, we must strengthen our Organization so that it will be able to cope with new challenges and new realities.

Members of the United Nations, each in its own way, are trying to bring development to their respective countries. In order to succeed, they must choose the path that best suits their needs. They must choose the path that is compatible with present-day realities, taking into consideration their history, their culture and their national ethos. There is no single formula that can be applied to all countries. It would be wrong for powerful countries to impose their systems on others. It would be wrong for the powerful to mould the developing countries in their own image.

In this context, let me once again reiterate that Myanmar is building a genuine and durable democratic system in its own way. While armed conflicts anywhere in the world, once started, are difficult to resolve peacefully, in our country the flames of conflict have been extinguished and the guns silenced. And yet there are some who would like to stir up the tranquil waters. That is when we have to take preventive measures. We have to respect the will of the 50 million people who would like to preserve the hard-won peace, who do not want to see any moves which would lead the nation back to total anarchy and disintegration.

In taking such preventive measures, the Government handles the situation in a most humane manner. We do no harm to anyone. We do not commit any atrocities.

The Government is taking a constructive path, while opposing forces are embarking on a path of destruction. Confrontational and destructive actions

can only impede the process of democratization of our country, let alone the achievement of that process.

The world is now experiencing another technological revolution — the information technology revolution. The industrial revolution has resulted in the colonization of the peoples of the developing countries. We must make doubly sure that the information technology revolution does not bring along with it a new form of colonialism. This revolution has the potential to benefit all mankind. We must also make doubly sure that the fruits of the new revolution are available worldwide.

With the advent of globalization, many new opportunities have been opened to us. At the same time, there is a very real possibility that globalization will result in the rich becoming richer and the poor becoming even more impoverished. At the dawn of the new century, it is imperative that we make every effort to eliminate these disparities. In this respect, we rightfully look to the United Nations to play a leading role.

In all this the role of the United Nations is of paramount importance. We must reform the Organization so that it will be equal to the task. While changes should be introduced to it, there are cardinal principles of the Organization and its Charter which are sacrosanct. The principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity, sovereign equality and non-interference in internal affairs are cardinal principles which have enabled the world community to live in peace. Therefore, I totally disagree with those who contend that these principles are outdated and that we do not need them in the new century. They are as valid in the new century as they were in the old.

It is our hope that this Summit will once again reaffirm the cardinal principles of international conduct. These principles served us well in the old millennium. They will serve us equally well in the new millennium.

The Acting Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency The Honourable Dato' Seri Syed Hamid Albar, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Malaysia.

Mr. Albar (Malaysia): We are gathered here to reaffirm our faith in the United Nations, which has served the international community for over half a century. It is indeed a critical and soul-searching moment for members of this Organization. We need to reflect on the past, draw lessons from it and see how the Organization can best serve the international community.

The Organization must continue to ensure freedom and equality and the right of humankind to live in dignity — free from hunger, poverty, violence, oppression and injustice. It must continue to be on the vanguard of global efforts towards the emancipation of all of humankind from these ills. It must also continue, through its development programmes and activities, to be an important vehicle and catalyst for the transformation of societies in the developing world.

The United Nations must be a more democratic body. It cannot champion democracy and good governance in the domestic politics of its members while ignoring these very same principles in its own operation. Reform is imperative for an Organization that was fashioned more than half a century ago in the prevailing circumstances of the 1940s. Its future viability and relevance to the contemporary world will depend on how successfully it modernizes itself.

For the United Nations to be relevant with the times and in tune with new realities, it must serve its membership in its entirety. The state of the world today is vastly different from that of the 1940s. Unless the United Nations discards its mindset of the past, it will be allowing itself to be a hostage to a bygone era.

The vast majority of the Members of the United Nations today are developing countries — many of them small and vulnerable. They look to the Organization — as the repository of their hopes and aspirations for a better and more equitable world order based on the principles of shared responsibility, commitments and obligations — as an important forum for the articulation of their views, but they also expect it to be responsive to their concerns and needs. The smaller Member States, especially those in the least-developed category, should not feel that they are being sidelined but that they can expect to participate in discussions on global issues and make a meaningful contribution.

Consequently, any meaningful reform of the Organization must place the interests of the majority of its Members at the core of such an exercise. There is also a need to reform the other organs of the United Nations, particularly the Security Council, the body charged with the maintenance of international peace

and security. It remains an anachronistic institution, reflecting the realities and power equations of the immediate post-Second-World-War period rather than those of the contemporary world we live in. The Council should be enlarged and restructured to reflect the new realities and be made more democratic, both in its structure and its decision-making process. The Organization cannot be said to have made the transition to the twenty-first century if the Security Council remains set in its old ways and procedures.

The United Nations must face current challenges even as it must continue to address the issues of the past century. These include, inter alia, the still-unresolved issue of peace in the Middle East, particularly Palestine; weapons of mass destruction; and inter-State territorial disputes around the globe. It has to come to grips with the increasing phenomenon of intra-State conflicts revolving around inter-ethnic rivalries, discrimination, religious intolerance or extremism.

The United Nations cannot but be compelled to play the leading role in the process of globalization which has overwhelmed much of the world. Clearly, globalization is here to stay. It will have a tremendous impact on human affairs and on the process of achieving global peace, security and development, and the enjoyment of human rights.

For many developing countries, unfortunately, globalization offers more challenges than opportunities. Greater globalization means increased vulnerability to unfamiliar and unpredictable forces that bring economic instability, financial upheaval and social dislocation, sometimes with lightning speed. To protect emerging economies from the negative effects of speculative capital flows, Malaysia has continuously called for an urgent review and reform of the current international financial architecture. Such reform is imperative if we are to ensure a well-functioning global economy that will reap the full benefits of the globalization process.

There is also a need for greater international cooperation to deal with the risks and challenges of the new and dynamic international environment, requiring measures and approaches that are sensitive to the particular needs of Member States.

Malaysia believes that the views of developing countries and their right to special and differential treatment must be taken into account in any multilateral negotiations. In this regard the United Nations has an important, legitimate and constructive role to play given its universal membership and moral weight on global issues. We commend the Secretary-General for initiating dialogue and interactions with the Bretton Woods institutions. We hope this will be further developed as an integral mechanism in the Organization's efforts to influence the deliberations of important international institutions, including those of the World Trade Organization.

The United Nations has an enormous task ahead in the twenty-first century. Let us all work together in a true spirit of mutual understanding and full cooperation to achieve our goals.

The Acting Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Amre Moussa, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Egypt.

Mr. Moussa (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): It is my honour to convey the greetings of President Hosni Mubarak, along with his apologies for being unable to participate in this meeting. At the same time, I wish to convey to the Assembly his views and his thoughts as President of Egypt.

We are at a historic juncture. The world is emerging from an old era which lasted for 20 centuries into a new era that begins with the twenty-first century. This new era is marked by an unprecedented, comprehensive global outlook, by scientific advances and breakthroughs that no one could have anticipated, and by the laying of foundations for an interdependent international community whose societies and individuals interact on the basis of transparency, ample availability of information and respect for the rights of the individual and of the community. All of this renews our hope for a future in which we can realize our aspirations and fulfil the dreams that mankind has always expressed through literature, poetry and visions.

The horizon of the future is vast, and so are the great, serious challenges confronting us. Our duty at this historic juncture is to establish jointly the intellectual basis for dealing with the new century, with its potential and its hopes, manifested in the information revolution and in the scientific advances and the achievements of modern technology.

In the few minutes allotted to us, Egypt would like to focus on some of what it sees as essential to

universal dialogue. With reference to our hopes and aspirations: those that have been achieved should not conceal the fact that most of the world continues to suffer from poverty, ignorance and disease. It still confronts the problems and dangers of debt, war, terrorism, illicit drugs, deteriorating environments, racial discrimination, religious intolerance, intellectual extremism and a host of diseases of our modern age. Prominent among these is the growing, seemingly unstoppable desire for hegemony and domination, and the desire to exercise the arrogance of power and to ignore democratic principles in international relations. All of this creates tension in the world.

Advances in intellectual pursuits, expansion of available information and the opening of channels for the free circulation of information must not mean the promotion of a culture of defiance and conflict with other cultures, with one culture unwilling to coexist with other cultures. Some cultures with a deeply rooted heritage and well established resources persist in rejecting dialogue and interaction. It is as if we were being forced to choose between the hegemony of the values of a specific culture, which we are all obliged to acknowledge, and a desperate struggle for survival.

There is plenty of room for coexistence and harmony among cultures and civilizations; we should affirm this so that we can build a new life.

Egypt cannot imagine the establishment of a new, stable international order without dialogue among all as a joint endeavour, and without a sharing of responsibility for the building of that edifice. In that connection, Egypt calls for a broad, extensive debate in the framework of the General Assembly, which is a universal parliament, to draw up an international contract with the participation of representatives of various legislative bodies and civil societies. In speaking of a new international order I am referring not only to issues pertaining to decision-making on matters of international peace and security, finance, economics and trade; I refer also to issues relating to women, children, population, economic and social development, health, disease, the environment and other problems of which we have spoken in the past.

We reaffirm the importance of narrowing the digital divide so that everyone can benefit from the revolution in communication and information technology.

Egypt calls for enhancing the role and effectiveness of the United Nations in the maintenance of international peace and security in the face of the new, changing threats that have emerged over the past decade. We also stress the importance of establishing a stable collective-security system. Disarmament issues related to such a regime include eliminating weapons of mass destruction, nuclear disarmament and promoting a more effective role for peacemaking and peacekeeping.

We also stress the importance of completing the debate on restructuring the Security Council so that we can strike a fair deal that will make it possible to increase the number of its permanent and non-permanent seats, taking into account the need for the overwhelming majority — the developing countries — to exercise their rights and responsibilities regarding representation and to serve as active members of the international community. Equal importance must be given to reform of the Council's working methods through increased transparency and democracy in decision-making, and especially to reconsidering the use of the veto. In that connection, the role of the General Assembly in the maintenance of international peace and security must be reaffirmed.

Last but not least, I want to congratulate the Secretary-General on the valuable report he submitted to the Millennium Summit. I call for a discussion of the ideas set out in that report in universities and other academic and research centres and intellectual forums. There should be comprehensive discussion of the report in the General Assembly, so that we can jointly address the major international issues it raises. It is here in this Hall that we should formulate and launch a plan of action to deal with those problems.

I wish also to stress the importance we attach to the recommendations set out in the Brahimi report on United Nations peace operations. The General Assembly must be prepared to discuss these recommendations seriously.

Egypt has been following the work of the Millennium Forum for non-governmental organizations, and we welcome its final document, which contains a plan of action stressing the importance of respect for national sovereignty and for the right of peoples to self-determination. It also calls for nuclear disarmament, an end to economic sanctions and addressing the negative impact of globalization.

Egypt comes to this high-level gathering bearing the troubles of its region. I take this opportunity to voice our aspirations with respect to bringing about peace and development in Africa, a just, comprehensive and lasting peace in the Middle East, and the establishment of a Palestinian State, that would crown the peace process that Egypt initiated more than 20 years ago. It is high time for that peace process to attain its final goals in a manner that will open up the horizons of a better future as we begin a new century and a new millennium.

The Acting Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Batyr Berdyev, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan.

Mr. Berdyev (Turkmenistan): It is a great honour for me to speak from the rostrum of this historic Millennium Summit of the General Assembly. First of all, allow me to convey words of greeting from Mr. Saparmurat Niyazov, President of Turkmenistan. On the eve of the Summit, we distributed a document containing an article by the President of Turkmenistan relating to the inauguration of the Summit, entitled "The Turkmens: Turkmenistan and the world millennia and the twenty-first century: the bond of time and civilizations". That document highlights our philosophy and strategy for the development of a neutral and independent Turkmenistan, its involvement in the system of global relationships and its vision of the role and place of the United Nations in the twenty-first century. I would like to draw attention to some of the elements contained in this document.

Globalization is one of the main trends of modern times; however, despite its objective and generally progressive nature, we cannot ignore the potential threat of social upheavals and attempts to homogenize political systems and to reduce the historically established diversity of world views and systems of cultural values to only one political philosophy that leaves no other alternative open. At the same time, we share the view that in the twenty-first century, facing new challenges, the United Nations system needs to be radically reformed. We support a United Nations reform aimed at strengthening and expanding the Organization's role in the world. We are against the dissolution of the United Nations into some new supranational structures. We are against any attempts by individual States or groups of States to usurp United Nations functions.

This applies fully in the case of such a serious problem as that of Afghanistan. It is our firm belief, and facts from the history of the long-suffering Afghan people most vividly demonstrate, that any outside interference in the Afghan conflict is doomed to failure. Dividing the Afghan people into "bad" and "good" brings only a new cycle of bloodshed. The United Nations should have complete confidence that Turkmenistan is a reliable partner, prepared to actively contribute to an Afghan settlement.

As regards ensuring stable social development and progress, regional cooperation is of special significance in today's world. At present our region is witnessing the formation of a stable system of active interaction under the aegis of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, which maintains partnership relations with the United Nations, the Association of South-East Asian Nations and other international institutions.

The efforts undertaken by Turkmenistan to export its energy resources to international markets serve the goals of development to no lesser extent. We are convinced that the contours of Eurasian security run along the routes of the future pipelines. In this sense, the construction of pipelines means not only profitable commercial projects, it also means the implementation of large-scale social development projects that go far beyond national boundaries.

As regards strengthening regional cooperation in Asia, it is highly important to ensure that the United Nations undertakes monitoring of the situation with regard to the establishment of a new legal status for the Caspian Sea. This new status should be determined by taking into account the interests of all the littoral States. Today the process of establishing a new international legal status for the Caspian Sea faces certain difficulties that could potentially have a rather undesirable influence on regional stability. Under these conditions, active involvement by the United Nations is considered to be very relevant.

Turkmenistan promotes respect, tolerance and humane attitudes in international relations and follows the same principles in its national life. In December 1999 the law on the complete and final abolition of capital punishment in Turkmenistan was adopted. This was the first such humanistic legislation in Asia. Turkmenistan acceded to the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political

Rights, which reaffirmed our intention to implement practically the principles of humanism, democracy and the protection of human freedoms and rights. However, in doing so we, as realistic and pragmatic people, believe that social development is an ongoing process that requires cooperation, the exchange of ideas and, above all, dialogue with the United Nations.

The interconnection and interdependence of the processes under way in today's world are evident. Their dialectics are built along the following line: human being — State — region — continent — whole world — humankind. Therefore, we believe that by understanding its entire responsibility any State and any nation — be it large or small — is capable today of influencing the entire course of world development precisely in accordance with this sequence. In line with this, international cooperation and dialogue among civilizations have to be free from any political dictates or preconditions. This is the approach on which Turkmenistan has always insisted and insists. This is an approach that corresponds to the moral criteria of the Turkmen people and their political philosophy.

The Acting Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Marcel Metefara, Minister for Foreign Affairs and for la Francophonie of the Central African Republic.

Mr. Metefara (Central African Republic) (*spoke in French*): Allow me first of all, on behalf of the delegation I am heading, to congratulate you warmly, Sir, on the initiative you have taken in holding this Summit, which is of such importance at the beginning of this new century.

As the Secretary-General has said, the Millennium Summit provides an opportunity to take stock and to consider the role the Organization will be called upon to play in the twenty-first century. The United Nations is indeed the ideal structure where all the energies of the planet should be united so as to confront the new challenges. This is why it is imperative for all of us to reform the United Nations to adapt it to the new demands of the third millennium.

In this regard, I would like to warmly congratulate the Secretary-General of our Organization and the Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) for the serious manner in which they are preparing the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, to be held in May 2001 in Brussels. For its part, the Central African Republic is actively participating in the preparations for that important gathering, and we attach the greatest importance to it. We hope that, at this threshold of the millennium, the outcome will be commensurate with the concerns, which have to do essentially with combating poverty.

I cannot conclude without thanking the international community and the United Nations system for the actions taken to consolidate peace and promote democracy in the Central African Republic.

May this Millennium Summit herald a new age of effective cooperation for progress and peace for the whole international community.

The Acting Co-Chairperson (Namibia): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Anund Priyay Neewoor, Chairman of the delegation of Mauritius.

Mr. Neewoor (Mauritius): I have the honour and privilege to address the Summit on behalf of the Prime Minister of Mauritius, who is unable to join the Assembly personally today, due to general elections in Mauritius, which are to take place on 11 September.

On behalf of our delegation, I extend to the Co-Chairpersons our very warm congratulations on their election to preside over this historic Summit, which is being held at the dawn of the new century and of a new millennium to reflect on the future role of the United Nations in bringing about a better tomorrow for all mankind.

I take this opportunity to express our deep gratitude to the President of the General Assembly at its fifty-fourth session, His Excellency Mr. Theo-Ben Gurirab, and to Secretary-General Kofi Annan for their leadership, vision and tireless work over many months in preparation for this extraordinary event.

We are all aware that the world order we have today is rapidly falling out of tune with the realities of our times and that there is a pressing need for the international community to come together and address the numerous challenges before us. These challenges have been comprehensively brought out in the inspiring document entitled "We the peoples", prepared and circulated by the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, whom we highly compliment for the excellent and thought-provoking work he has produced.

We remain faced today with many old issues, such as poverty, hunger, disease and illiteracy, to name only a few, which continue to afflict vast populations across the world. While large-scale wars have been averted under the existing world order, which is based largely on the Charter of the United Nations, low-level conflicts continue to occur, affecting the lives of millions of people, including women and children in different parts of the world, particularly in Africa. The spectre of nuclear holocaust continues to haunt humanity in the absence of the determination of the nuclear Powers to reach agreement for the total elimination, albeit in a phased manner, of their nuclear arsenals.

We must acknowledge that the present world order has proved to be glaringly inadequate in the efforts of the international community to address the old issues, let alone the new ones, arising from the globalization of the world economy, the rapid growth of information technology and the resulting digital divide, the consequences of the environmental degradation of our planet, HIV/AIDS, gender issues and many more.

Most regrettable is that the gap between the haves and the have-nots is enlarging dramatically rather than narrowing down. A large number of countries, reeling under the debt burden and with ever-dwindling foreign development assistance, cannot provide even the basic necessities of life to their peoples, such as satisfactory nutrition, safe drinking water, health care, proper shelter and, to children, their right to universal basic education. And these are among the countries that are striving to establish and consolidate democratic values, good governance and adherence to principles of human rights.

Moreover, they are endeavouring in difficult conditions to restructure their poor economies to meet the exigencies of globalization. The small island developing States are particularly confronted with unprecedented anxieties in the process of globalization due to their lack of capacity to meet the new challenges without any special dispensation for them in the emerging global economic and trade environment.

From Seattle to Washington, D.C., from Davos to London, and in many other places, people have spoken and have signalled in no uncertain terms that the present world order, particularly in economic, trade and development areas, is unsatisfactory and needs to be reformed and made more equitable and just for the benefit of humanity at large. What the people say in the streets now the developing countries have been saying for many years in various international forums, with little success.

We are aware that the United Nations cannot provide all the remedies for the ailments of the existing world order. The economic and trade issues fall within the purview of other relevant international institutions such as the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the World Trade Organization, and these organizations must address them seriously and comprehensively.

But the United Nations can and must do more in the future within the mandate of its Charter to promote faster economic and social, as well as personal, human development. In this regard, Secretary-General Kofi Annan's paper "We the peoples" constitutes, in our view, an important blueprint for the future work of the United Nations, provided that necessary financial resources are made available for that purpose.

The founding fathers of the United Nations wrote its Charter in the context of an emerging and far less complex world order in the aftermath of the Second World War. In the 55 years since, the world has been transformed so much that today we call it a global village. All the 189 Member States representing the world community recognize that it is time to reform the United Nations Charter so that it better reflects the realities and dynamism of the world of today. In particular, reform of the Security Council — the decision-making organ of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace and security — is long overdue, as in its present form it can hardly be regarded as a democratic body representative of the collective membership of the United Nations. We need to rise above national interests that have so far prevented the urgently required reforms from being achieved and expeditiously bring to a positive conclusion our long-drawn-out deliberations on this subject.

The United Nations is the only fully representative intergovernmental organization we have, with a comprehensive mandate to address almost all global issues. It represents the collective aspirations of all mankind for a peaceful, stable and prosperous world community. In the fulfilment of its noble objectives, it must be supported fully and unreservedly by all of us.

Mauritius fully endorses the Millennium Summit Declaration, which sets a minimum but important agenda to be pursued by the world community together to ensure the well-being of humanity as a whole as we progress into the twenty-first century.

The meeting rose at 2.40 p.m.